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## Manning throws six TD passes as Colts rout Lions

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Peyton Manning

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# Giving thanks in Iraq

# Close calls leave troops counting their blessings

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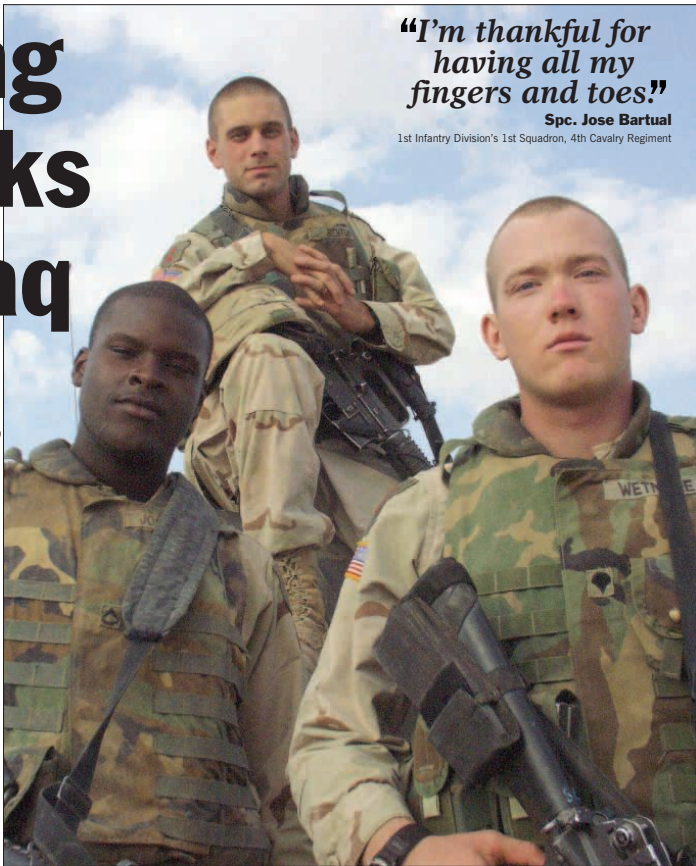
The sappers from Company B of the 9th Engineer Battalion have suffered more than their share of close calls, from mine explosions to mortar attacks to firefights. Their job is to find and identify roadside bombs before the bombs blow up, which exposes them to added risk. They are, from left: Pfc. Denaunbe Joshua, 20, of Washington, D.C.; Sgt. Jason Benton, 25, of Fortuna, Calif.; and Spc. Steve Wetmore, 20, of Union City, Pa.

**STEVE LIEWER**/Stars and Stripes

***"I'm thankful for  
having all my  
fingers and toes!"***

**Spc. Jose Bartual**

1st Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment



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# News Tracker ... What's new with old news

## States

**Martha Stewart appeal:** The government urged a federal appeals court in New York to uphold the conviction of Martha Stewart, arguing that "overwhelming evidence" supported the guilty verdict against the celebrity housewife.

Stewart, serving a five-month sentence at a West Virginia prison, had argued to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that prosecutors improperly suggested at her trial that she was charged with insider trading.

The appeals court is unlikely to hear oral arguments in the case until early next year and probably will not rule on the appeal before Stewart leaves prison.

**GI's mother's death:** A woman who collapsed and died hours after viewing the body of her son killed while serving in Iraq suffered a heart attack, Arizona authorities said. Karen Unruh-Wahrer, 45, had atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, more commonly known as hardening of the arteries, which led to her Oct. 2 heart attack, said Dr. Bruce Parks, Pima County's chief medical examiner.

Unruh-Wahrer was said to be inconsolable after the death of her 25-year-old son, Visay Spc. Robert Oliver Unruh, who was killed Sept. 25 by enemy fire near Baghdad.

**Impostor sentenced:** A man who posed as a gynecologist after setting up an office in a self-storage complex was sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to practicing medicine without a license.

The charges stemmed from an undercover investigation that began after authorities in Dallas saw an ad in a weekly newspaper offering free medical care.

Thomas P. Remo, 50, of Ovilla, wore a scrub shirt and had some medical equipment in the makeshift exam room, a small kitchen in the storage facility office where he worked, authorities said.

**Hinckley request:** The man who shot President Reagan may continue taking short, overnight trips away from a mental hospital, but a federal judge says John Hinckley Jr. is not ready for longer visits.

U.S. District Judge Paul L. Friedman on Wednesday denied Hinckley's request to spend four nights at a time, every two weeks, visiting his parents at their home in Williamsburg, Va.

Friedman said he first wanted doctors to sort out whether Hinckley has unresolved feelings toward a former girlfriend.



**U.N. hostages released:** Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, right, greets freed Filipino hostage Angelito Nayan at the Malacanang palace in Manila on Thursday. The release this week of Nayan and two other U.N. workers who were kidnapped in Kabul is shrouded in mystery, the freed hostages have made no comment about how they were set free or who snatched them, and Afghan officials insist they did not agree to any concession.

**Sniper shootings:** Sniper mastermind John Allen Muhammad and his teenage accomplice Lee Boyd Malvo will not face charges for a slaying in Washington state months before they went on their rampage in and around the nation's capital, prosecutors said Wednesday.

Prosecutor Jerry Costello said there was little point in putting on an expensive trial in Tacoma for the February 2002 shooting death of Keenya Cook since the pair already face the death penalty or life in prison in Virginia.

## World

**West Bank barrier:** Israel should stop building its West Bank separation barrier if Palestinian militants halt attacks, Israel's president was quoted as saying Thursday, in the most high-profile criticism yet of the contentious project.

The separation barrier and the Gaza withdrawal are part of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's so-called "unilateral disengagement" from the Palestinians. The barrier would serve as a temporary frontier until a final peace deal is negotiated.

**Mark Thatcher trial:** A South African court on Thursday postponed Sir Mark Thatcher's

trial for allegedly helping finance a failed coup attempt in oil-rich Equatorial Guinea until April 8 for further investigation.

Thatcher, the 51-year-old son of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, was not asked to plead.

Magistrate Avrie Kotze granted the delay at the request of prosecutors. He also extended Thatcher's bail conditions, which require that he remain in the Cape Town area and report daily to police.

Thatcher, who has lived in South Africa since 1995, was arrested at his suburban Cape Town home on August 25 and charged with violating this country's anti-money laws. He also faces charges in Equatorial Guinea.

## Business

**Disney security guards:** Walt Disney World's security guards overwhelmingly rejected a new three-year labor contract, ignoring a recommendation from their union leaders.

Members of the Security, Police, and Fire Professionals of America Local 603 voted down the agreement 296-26 late Wednesday.

Negotiations are to resume next week.

Stories and photo from wire services

"The photo  
is actually  
woven  
into the  
blanket

so wash  
after wash  
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will never  
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Toddler  
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PHOTOS BY STEVE LEWIS/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Orville Whitlock, 30, of Lynchburg, Va., explains how a rocket-propelled grenade hit his Company B, 9th Engineer Battalion Humvee during a patrol May 5. Whitlock and four other soldiers received shrapnel wounds — which he said "feels like someone sliced open your back and poured in hot chicken grease" — but all survived.

# On edge but thankful

## Warfighters in Iraq say training, luck adrenaline get them through close calls

By STEVE LEWIS  
Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE  
MACKENZIE, Iraq

**S**ix-hundred-thirty times since the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment arrived in Iraq last March, it has been attacked by the enemy.

Sometimes a roadside bomb blows up next to a truck. A mortar explodes in the middle of the base. Insurgents pop out from hidden positions and open fire with AK-47 rifles on a whole convoy. In Iraq, the front lines are nowhere, and they are everywhere.

At a base like FOB Mackenzie, home of the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, it is hard to find an infantryman, engineer, supply sergeant, pilot or clerk who hasn't had a close brush with death. Most have had several.

They've lived through things they'll never share with anyone except other combat veterans and fought fear beyond anything most civilians will ever feel. The experience has changed some of them in ways they don't yet realize.

"These guys are battle-hardened. There isn't anybody who hasn't been under attack," said Maj. Kirk Dorr, 38, of Marlboro, Mass., the squadron's operations officer. "The logisticians and convoy supporters see just as much contact as our line troops."

Seven 1-4 Cavalry troopers and

one civilian from Mackenzie have died in the nine months since the unit took over the former Iraqi airfield 20 miles east of Samarra. More than 50 others have been wounded.

Hundreds of 1-4 Cavalry soldiers have dodged death by a whisker, aided by luck, pluck or divine providence. Almost everyone here can name three or four or more occasions they should have died, but didn't.

"I can't even count them," said Spc. Joshua Burgess, 25, of Arlington, Texas, a member of Troop B. He has lived through two bomb attacks on his convoy the same day and countless pot shots he describes as

out of nowhere, from an invisible enemy.

"The first 10 or 15 seconds, everything is chaos," said Capt. John Trylich, 30, the Troop B commander. "The explosion, the dust and dirt.... The radios start screaming, everyone is yelling."

But then the training really does kick in. Soldiers remember what they're supposed to do: take a firing position, man a radio, organize troops or treat casualties. Leaders say panic is surprisingly rare.

"Even though you want to duck down, you can't," said Spc. Robert Laurell, 21, of Troy, Mo., a gunner for the 9th Engineers. "Your battle buddies are relying on you to stay up there and keep firing."

Heading out on the next patrol isn't always easy. But it is part of the job. Every soldier must find a way to get past the fear.

"Everybody deals with it differently," said Sgt. Jason Benton, 25, of the 9th Engineers. "I just try not to think about it, act like it's the first time I'm going out again."

Pfc. Joshua Schmidt, 21, said he didn't want to leave the base in an armor-

less Humvee after surviving a mine strike in an armored one last April. Burtal said he struggled to get back in his vehicle and go on patrol again after the near-miss at the cemetery.

"I was a nervous wreck after finishing that mission," Burtal said. "I used to get blisters from gripping the steering wheel so tight."

SEE CLOSE ON PAGE 4

## Troops recount how they narrowly escaped death

### Wrong place becomes right

**N**ot long ago, Capt. John Trylich, 30, the lanky, redheaded commander of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment's Troop B "Bulldozers," issued a stern butt-chewing to one of his Bradley fighting vehicle crews for parking on the main road of Forward Operating Base Mackenzie, Iraq, instead of 40 yards away in a marshaling yard, the proper spot to line up for the afternoon convoy.

Trylich thought about moving the Bradley and several Humvees to the yard but decided not to waste the time. Within five minutes, the commander and his troops heard the crack and the scream of an incoming rocket, followed by a deafening boom that sent everyone running for the safety of their armored vehicles.

"It was very quick, very loud and very close," Trylich said. "We were scattering like roaches, running for cover."

When the dust settled, Trylich and his men saw that the 107 mm rocket had landed just 40 meters away — precisely where the convoy should have lined up.

"It was literally a stone's throw from where we were standing," he said, shaking his head. "An angel was on our side that day."

### A landing and then a getaway

**C**hief Warrant Officer 3 Rob Carpenter, 37, of the squadron's Troop E, had been flying his OH-58 Kiowa Warrior in the early-April uprising called the "battle of Baquba" northeast of Baghdad.

Flying in support of the 1st Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade, Carpenter and his co-pilot saw insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades toward them. Suddenly one hit their main rotor, knocking off four feet of one blade.

"We could feel the concussion," Carpenter said. "It was very violent. I wasn't thinking about anything else because I had about seven seconds before I hit the ground."

In a crowded city neighborhood, they happened to come down — hard but safely — in the only open field around: a neighborhood cesspool. They could hear angry mobs and small-arms fire in the distance.

"We knew we needed to get away," Carpenter said. "I didn't want to leave the helicopter, but I didn't want to get strung up on a bridge, either."

Carpenter and the co-pilot ran through the muck and commandeered a civilian car, but they didn't know where to go. Then the "cavalry" rode to the rescue. Along came a convoy of troops from the 1st Squadron, 6th Field Artillery.

"I saw Humvees screaming around the corner," Carpenter recalled. "I said 'God bless America!'"

### No April fool

**C**apt. Steven Janko, a military lawyer assigned to the 1-4 Cav, keeps a reminder of his closest call sitting on his desk.

On April 1, as he walked back to his office from the command bunker at Mackenzie about 7 p.m., a shower of rockets rained down on the base.

"We just started running into the bunker. Four or five rockets had come down already," said Janko, 32, of Honolulu.

He felt a spray of gravel hit his helmet. He looked behind him and saw a 107 mm rocket nose down in the parking lot, about 10 feet from where he stood. An 8-foot plume of smoke sped from its tail — but the rocket didn't explode. Janko ran into the office he shares with the squadron's chaplain, Capt. Gary Fisher, and his assistant, Staff Sgt. Ed Baptist.

"I said 'Guess what, there's a rocket outside!'" Janko said, "but nobody would believe me because it was April Fools' Day."

— Steve Lewis



Spc. Jose Burtal



Spc. Robert Laurell



Capt. Steve Janko



Sgt. Anthony Troche, left, and Pfc. Jihoon Ham

## No safety in ambulance

It's a good day when you hit a bomb and your only casualty is a bottle of iced tea.

Pfc. Jihoon Ham and Sgt. Anthony Troche, medics with the 557th Medical Company, learned as much in September, when a roadside bomb hit their ambulance as they convoyed from Mosul to Tikrit.

The vehicle in front of them spotted the bomb, but Ham and Troche's ambulance had rolled just past it when the unseen insurgent detonated it.

"I was kind of surprised," said Ham, 24, of Flushing, N.Y., who was driving. "It was a pretty loud boom."

The explosion flattened both tires and spun the ambulance three-quarters of the way around. A cascade of shrapnel pierced the patient compartment in the rear, but no one was there.

One jagged piece of metal penetrated the cab four inches from Troche's head. Another shattered a container of iced tea between them in the front seat.

The whole vehicle was smelling like peach iced tea," said Troche, 28, of Hormigueros, Puerto Rico.

The stunned medics looked at each and realized neither had been hurt.

"I said, 'Whoa, that was close,'" Troche recalled. "After that, we could say we survived that one. We're good to go."

## Dangerous roads

Sometimes close calls come in bunches.

That's a lesson Spc. Joshua Burgess, 25, of Arlington, Texas, learned Aug. 1 on Main Supply Route Grape, a highway east of Samarra that was frequently attacked during the summer when insurgents controlled the city.

The patrol of three Humvees from Company B of the 1-4 Cav felt that morning to check the route for roadside bombs: one of the most dangerous jobs on one of the most dangerous roads in Iraq.

Then his patrol found one.

A powerful "daisy chain" bomb made of three 155 mm artillery rounds tied together exploded underneath one of the other Humvees about 11 a.m. One soldier died instantly, and another lay mortally wounded, his legs blown off by the force of the blast.

"Your world just goes to [explosive] when that happens," Burgess said.

Burgess, in the next Humvee, blacked out briefly and suffered a concussion.

But the patrol regrouped. A call went out for a medical evacuation helicopter for two injured soldiers, and to the "Bulldozer" troop headquarters for help.

Capt. John Trylich led a relief convoy that included three M1 Abrams tanks. They recovered the bombed-out vehicle, packed up, and rolled back toward their camp, FOB MacKenzie.

Trylich decided to try a trick a sergeant first class from an engineer platoon had suggested to him that morning. He ordered the almost indestructible tanks to drive along the edges of the road, where insurgents typically bury their bombs. The sergeant said a tank would bury a bomb enough to limit the death and destruction even if it did blow.

The trick worked.

An even more powerful bomb, this one with four 155 mm shells, exploded under a Humvee 10 minutes after they rolled out. The driver and a passenger suffered only minor injuries.

"The tanks saved those guys," Trylich said later. "Even though it was a tragic situation, it was a lucky day."

— Steve Liewer

# Close: Safety within inches

CLOSE, FROM PAGE 3

Occasionally someone finds excuses to dodge a mission. But soldiers know their buddies depend on them. It doesn't happen often.

"If you don't go, someone else has to," said Spc. Steve Wetmore, 20, of Union City, Pa., and the 9th Engineers.

Sgt. Orville Whitlock, a squad

leader with the 9th Engineers' sappers, survived an RPG strike on his Humvee May 5. The detonating charge whizzed just inches from the heads of the two men in the right-side seats, exploding against the front wind-shield in a shower of safety glass. All five occupants suffered shrapnel wounds.

Still he rides on patrols — sometimes in the same Humvee, which still is scarred with a large hole where the grenade hit.

"Everybody's scared. But you can't be too scared to function," Whitlock said. "I use the fear and the worry about coming back as fuel to get through the mission."

"You have to keep your head in the game," Benton said. "You can't fear death."

Rarely do soldiers discuss these close calls with anyone back home. They don't want to worry wives, kids, husbands or parents.

"I don't tell 'em anything — just 'everything's good, the weather's getting better,'" said Benton, who has a wife, Schanlanmang, and two children back home in Schweinfurt, Germany. "They already worry enough about me."

"You've got to candy-coat it," said Spc. Shane Stupavsky, 20, of Quincy, Ill., who serves in Trylich's troop.

Even among themselves, soldiers say, they don't often talk much about combat once it's over. But there is an unspoken bond among troops who have been together in an especially hairy mission.

"Sometimes just a glance, a pause in a discussion, is worth a thousand words," Trylich said.

With the 1st Infantry Division's deployment now almost three-quarters complete, troops are thinking more and more about getting home safely and need to stay focused on the mission at hand, soldiers said.

Nearly 100 of the 22,000 sol-

diers from the 1st ID-led Task Force Danger — which also includes brigades from the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division and the North Carolina National Guard, plus many smaller Guard and Reserve detachments — have been killed.

Ironically, there is a grim joy to war. Soldiers report a fierce adrenaline rush from combat, and they get to use the skills they've trained at for years. There's a certain pride in surviving a tough scrape.

"Any soldier that's gone into combat has to be satisfied with what he's done," said Capt. Gary Fisher, the 39-year-old 4 Cavalry chaplain from Alexandria, La. "It's life-defining. It's very fulfilling to have achieved 'mission complete.'"

He has twice been in convoys in which soldiers died from enemy attacks. He vividly remembers the pavement burning his knees, the sweat pouring from his head, as he prayed in the ear of an injured sergeant.

"I am most alive when I experience moments of combat," said Fisher. "It has a way of cutting away everything that's unnecessary for life."

Some soldiers say they've already sensed the jarring difference between life at home and life in a combat zone.

"When I went home on [rest



*"I don't tell [the family] anything — just 'everything's good, the weather's getting better.' They already worry enough about me."*

Sgt. Jason Benton

and recuperation], people were just griping and bitching about little things," Schmidt said. "They're not thinking about getting killed every time."

Dorr believes troops who have lived close to death have been changed in ways that they won't fully appreciate until long after they get home.

"There are certainly some people here who have seen some awful things," he said. "You're either going to leave Iraq a better person or a worse person. But you're going to change."

"I think they understand," Fisher said, "that this is the defining moment in their lives."

E-mail Steve Liewer at: [liewers@mail.eastripes.osd.mil](mailto:liewers@mail.eastripes.osd.mil)



Spc. Joshua Burgess



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Evening Service			
Children's Sunday School		Power Hour	8:00pm-9:00
Youth Adult Service			
Home Fellowship (every 1st & 3rd Sunday)	1:00pm 6:00pm	<b>THURSDAY</b>	
		Come to the River	
		Charismatic Service (3rd Friday of month)	
<b>TUESDAY</b>		<b>FRIDAY</b>	
Ladies Bible Study		Charismatic Service (3rd Friday of month)	
Ladies Night Out (2nd Tues of month)		<b>SATURDAY</b>	
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# Thanksgiving in Iraq, home in their dreams



**Sgt. Brad Nix of the 644th Transportation Company grabs a Thanksgiving dinner Thursday at Logistics Support Area Anacanda, Iraq. Troops across the country had a chance to enjoy a traditional turkey dinner.**

RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

## All the trimmings are there, but the dinner isn't quite the same as Mom's home cooking

BY RON JENSEN

Stars and Stripes

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, Iraq — Thanksgiving. Give thanks.

Hey, thanks. Thanks a lot. "It kind of stinks," said Pvt. 1st Class Clifton Thompson, a mechanic with 1st Brigade, 25th Base Support Battalion. He'd rather be back home in Olympia, Wash. He'd be deer hunting with his father. Then he'd eat a big meal. Then he'd watch football. Then he'd sleep.

Instead, he's in a chow line. In Iraq. At LSA Anacanda's largest dining facility.

Thanksgiving. Give thanks. "It's like another duty day," said Tech Sgt. Tim Dorman of the 732nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron.

He, too, is in line. The sun is shining on the dust. He's not home in Virginia. They're smoking a turkey there. He'd help eat it. Watch football. Take a nap. Get up. And eat dessert. Again.

The dining facility looks nice. Some big colorful cakes declare in icing. "Happy Thanksgiving!" There's a house made of crackers. Colorful bunting. In autumn colors. Brown and orange.

It's festive. It's Thanksgiving-like. They piled it on. KBR brought 200,000 pounds of turkey, 45,000 pounds of stuffing and 25 tons of mashed potatoes to Iraq.

Thanksgiving in Iraq. "Right now, my family's getting together with my brother's home. He lives in Fort Walton, (Fla.)," said Master Sgt. Philip Gaylord, 732nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group.

He's not there. He's in Iraq.

See related story on Page 14

Sgt. Jimmy Billingsley is a driver with the 1171st Transportation Company with the Tennessee National Guard. He's dealing with 11 playing milk games.

"We make the best out of it," he said. "We know it's Thanksgiving. So in our minds, we make it Thanksgiving." Football later. Much later. The first game is at 9 p.m. in Iraq, long after the pumpkin pie. There were 73,750 pies in theater.

Back home in Humbolt, Tenn., Sgt. Jerry Cox, also of the 1171st, would "eat till you fall down."

He might do that here. There're 5,000 hams to be eaten, too.

That's one thing, then, he won't miss out on: the food.

"It just seems like another day in Iraq," he said.

The dining facilities held a competition. Which one would be best decorated for the holiday. Ice sculptures. Big, tall cakes of several layers. Autumn colors.

Thanksgiving, you know.

The troops ate the turkey and the bean and the cranberry sauce — 25,000 pounds of cranberry sauce is in the country.

They dug into the pumpkin pie and the eggnog. Iraq was floating in 8,750 gallons of eggnog. Alcohol-free eggnog, of course.

It was a special day. A thankful day. Plenty of food. It was good, too.

"I'd be at my mother's home right now (in Tennessee)," said Sgt. Christie Cosola of the 1171st. "That's where they're at. The whole family gets together."

Not the whole family. She's in Iraq. First in line, actually. Just happened that way.

"Like every other day around here," she said. "I'm going home soon. That's what I'm thinking about."

Something to be thankful about. It's Thanksgiving in Iraq.

E-mail Ron Jensen at: [jensen@mail.strips.com](mailto:jensen@mail.strips.com)

# Back home, soldiers find solace in one another

BY JESSE HAMILTON

The Hartford Courant

Every day. The two loners talk almost every day.

Five minutes on the phone. How about you? Nothing special. How about you? Most times, Joe Yorksi doesn't tell Dan Lawler how much it hurts to have watched his old life — his pre-Iraq life — come apart, his marriage over, his family split in two.

And Lawler doesn't always mention the way he can close his eyes sometimes and feel like he's back in Baghdad, as if a mortar shell might fall at any second to shatter his peace.

There's no reason to dwell on these things with each other. Both already know. Even when it's not mentioned, their year in Iraq is with them, living in the pauses in conversation, pushing them closer together.

Lawler isn't sure why he picks up the phone in his New Jersey office and dials Yorksi at the New Britain Police Department in New Britain, Conn. He just can't help wondering what his platoon mate from the 143rd Military Police Company might be doing. So he calls. And it doesn't matter what they talk about. It's enough that they are connected again.

Both need that contact, because the war came home with them. Not roadside bombs and gunfire, but different dangers, the kind of trouble that rings familiar to veterans of any war.

So as they try again to live normal lives, the loners find themselves doing what they're used to: watching each other's back.

steering wheel. Pfc. Rachel Bosveld was unconscious but alive.

Lawler and another soldier cut Bosveld from her seat belt and carried the 19-year-old between them toward the station, stopping only when a mortar explosion forced Lawler to his knees.

"She stopped breathing!" Lawler shouted in the crowded room. The CPR didn't work. It couldn't. A small piece of shrapnel had hit a spot not protected by her body armor. It punched through her torso, burning a trail through her insides that no medic could fix. Rachel Bosveld, a homesick teen barely out of high school, was on her way back home.

He signed up to be Staff Sgt. Joe Yorksi again. But he didn't expect his unit to be called up so quickly. The 143rd was among several in Connecticut that would get a look inside another Middle East war.

As the months passed, he didn't receive cards or letters or the care packages that other soldiers received. Something was wrong at home. He talked to his wife from a phone bank in downtown Baghdad while his squad guarded the street outside. He applied for emergency leave, but it was denied. He waited for a regular R&R and was among the first to receive one.

Yorski flew home for the two-week leave. When he got there he learned his wife was seeing another man and had decided to serve him with divorce papers.

The Army told him he didn't have to go back to Iraq. No. I have a squad, a bunch of young kids, Yorski told himself. I still have a job to do.

So he went back to Baghdad and to 3rd Platoon. The platoon was run by Lawler. Yorski had a growing friendship with the platoon sergeant who, when he wasn't snapping orders or chewing his soldiers out, reminded Yorski he had a family in Iraq that needed him, too. Lawler pushed Yorski right back into his duties. The two men bunked 5 feet from each other. In their scant off hours, they would talk about family life and missing their children.

For Yorski, "Dan was a big help."

## Trouble at home

The argument between Yorski and his wife, Denise, was the kind nobody would have wanted. Full of the falling towers of 9/11 and a friend he lost inside. He wanted to go back to the Connecticut National Guard's 143rd MP, the unit with which he'd gone to the 1991 Gulf War. He wanted to serve his country in something other than a New Britain police uniform.

Denise argued that he'd done his service. The Army didn't need him.

For the 34-year-old Yorski, though, having a family was reason enough to serve, to want to defend his country. I have to put my foot down, he told himself. I have to do this.

## Dodging bombs in Iraq

On Oct. 26, 2003, Sgt. 1st Class Dan Lawler was sitting in a Humvee in front of a Baghdad police station when the night air flashed with fire and shards of metal. The first detonations left his ears buzzing, but they were not loud enough to drown out the screaming.

A mortar shell had hit the Humvee next to his. Lawler and others from the 143rd moved toward the screams. Three soldiers from another group, the 527th MP, had been hit. Two were in desperate shape, their legs tangles of meat and blood. Lawler found the third, her helmeted head slumped against the Humvee



## Yokota Baptist Church

Pastor Warren Webster

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**Monday**

Faith Bible Institute 1830

**Tuesday**

Soul Winning & Visitation 1830

**Wednesday**

Evening Service & Prayer Mtg 1900

Patch & Pee Web Clubs 1900

**Friday**

Awana Club 1900

**Monthly**

Mens Prayer Breakfast 1st Sat

Ladies Meeting 1st Sat

\*Nov. 28th YBC ANNUAL FAMILY

THANKSGIVING DINNER

\*Nov. 28th Youth Activity

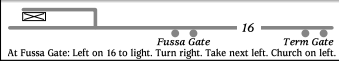
\*Dec. 2nd Ladies Bible Study Progressive Dinner

(Thursday 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)

\*Dec. 4th Adult Christmas Banquet (Sat. 6:30 p.m.)

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At Fussa Gate: Left on 16 to light. Turn right. Take next left. Church on left.



# Al-Zarqawi lieutenant captured in Mosul

## American civilian working with embassy killed outside Green Zone

BY SAMEER N. YACUB

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A lieutenant of Iraq's most feared terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was captured a few days ago in Mosul, and Iraqi troops searching suspected terrorist hideouts in Fallujah discovered a laboratory with manuals on manufacturing explosives and toxins — including anthrax, Iraq's national security adviser said Thursday.

Also, the U.S. military said it discovered the "largest weapons cache to date in the city of Fallujah." The weapons — including anti-tank mines and a mobile bomb-making lab — were found inside a mosque used by an insurgent leader. Troops also found documents detailing hostage interrogations, the military said.

The U.S. Embassy said Thursday that an American civilian working with the embassy was killed during an attack outside the Green Zone. In Washington, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell identified the man as James Mollen, a State Department education specialist who served as a consultant to Iraq's minister of education and the minister of higher education.

Spokesman Pete Mitchell said Mollen was traveling in a vehicle outside the protected Green

Zone, which houses the U.S. and Iraqi leadership, when he came under gunfire Wednesday afternoon.

Five Arab foreign fighters who escaped from Fallujah were arrested near the southern city of Basra, where they were planning to attack coalition bases and police stations, authorities said.

National security adviser Qassem Dawoud identified al-Zarqawi's alleged lieutenant as Abu Saeed, but he gave no further details.

Insurgents rose up this month in Mosul, Iraq's third-largest city, in support of rebels in Fallujah, who were routed by U.S. and Iraqi forces in an offensive that began Nov. 8. U.S. and Iraqi authorities managed to regain control of Mosul after the entire 5,000-member police force disintegrated.

Al-Zarqawi, whose al-Qaida-linked group has been responsible for numerous car bombings and beheadings of foreign hostages, including three Americans and a Briton, was believed headquartered in Fallujah. But the Jordanian-born extremist managed to escape the siege.

The United States has offered a \$25 million reward for al-Zarqawi's capture — the same amount being offered for Osama bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri.

In Fallujah, Iraqi forces un-



AP Photo

A firefighter hoses down a burning Iraqi police car after it came under attack from unknown gunmen in western Baghdad on Thursday. Witnesses said three police officers were wounded in the attack.

ered a lab in the southwestern district of the city, where pockets of insurgents are still holding out following the assault.

"We also found in the laboratory manuals and instructions spelling out procedures for making explosives," Dawoud said.

Dawoud showed pictures of a shelf containing what he said were various chemicals.

Earlier, the U.S. military said it had uncovered the largest arms cache yet inside the mosque of an insurgent leader in Fallujah. Troops found small arms, artillery shells, heavy machine guns, and anti-tank mines Wednesday inside the Saad Abi Bin Waqas Mosque in central Fallujah where Sunni rebel leader and imam Abdullah al-Janabi often spoke, the U.S. military said in a statement.

U.S. Marine officers say they so far have found enough weapons in Fallujah to refuel a nationwide rebellion.

Elsewhere in the mosque compound, troops also found what may be a mobile bomb-making factory housed in a truck, as well as mortar systems, rocket-propelled grenades, launchers, recoilless rifles and parts of surface-to-air weapons systems, the statement said.

The troops also found "documents that detailed insurgent interrogations of recent kidnap victims," the statement said.

U.S. and Iraqi troops continue to sweep the city amid sporadic gun battles with rebel holdouts.

Meanwhile, Basra Police Chief Brig. Mohammed Khazim said the five men were stopped late Wednesday at a checkpoint in Qurnah, about 35 miles north of

Basra, and "personal weapons" were found in their four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan said earlier this week that about 60 Arab fighters have been arrested during the Fallujah assault.

The U.S. and Iraqi leadership have repeatedly maintained that foreign fighters from neighboring Arabic countries have joined the insurgency.

Two of the captured fighters were identified as being from Saudi Arabia, two from Tunisia and one from Libya.

Meanwhile, an explosion hit a domestic pipeline Thursday that runs from northern Kirkuk to the Beiji refinery, oil officials said.

Saboteurs also attacked two oil wells near the Hinnreen Mountains, 75 miles south of Kirkuk, but the oil continued flowing, the official said.



A column of smoke is seen from behind Baghdad's Green Zone Thursday. Several explosions echoed Thursday across Iraq's capital of Baghdad, as thick black smoke rose above the heavily protected Green Zone.

## U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Wednesday, at least 1,230 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 961 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The figures include three military civilians. The British military has reported 74 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,092 U.S. military members have died,

according to AP's count. That includes at least 852 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No new deaths reported.  
The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Sgt. David L. Rountson, 22, West Seneca, N.Y., killed Saturday in a grenade attack on his vehicle in Baghdad; assigned to the Army National Guard, 1st Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, Tonawanda, N.Y.

■ Army Sgt. Joseph M. Nolan, 27, Philadelphia, killed Nov. 18 when an explosive detonated near his vehicle in Fallujah, Iraq; assigned to the 312th Military Intelligence Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

# Fort Hood GI charged in Iraqi civilian's death

BY T.A. BADGER  
The Associated Press

A U.S. soldier stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, was arrested and jailed Wednesday on a murder charge in the death of an Iraqi civilian in January.

Staff Sgt. Shane West, 31, of El Toro, Calif., is accused of killing the Iraqi man while serving with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team out of Fort Carson, Colo.

He also is charged with obstruction of justice for allegedly trying to get his comrades to lie about what happened to Naser Ismail after the Iraqi man was taken into custody in Balad on Jan. 3.

West is one of a number of Fort Carson-based soldiers charged with crimes in Iraq.

Two other members of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team face trial for manslaughter

in the drowning of an Iraqi man who soldiers reportedly pushed off a bridge into the Tigris River in January.

Lt. Col. Jonathan Withington, chief spokesman for the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, said charges were filed against West within days after another soldier came forward to report the alleged incident.

"It happened almost a year ago, but the evidence just emerged and just became known to the division," Withington said. "The command immediately brought in [Army criminal investigators] and we're going to get to the bottom of it."

Withington said Ismail was taken into custody by West's unit during a building-by-building search in Balad.

He would not say how Ismail died or whether charges against other soldiers were expected.

"It is an open and active investigation," Withington said.

"Currently we're focused on this specific soldier in this specific incident. Anything else would be speculation on my part."

West, who has been in the Army for nearly 14 years, is currently assigned to the 4th Infantry's Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

He was being held Wednesday at the Bell County Jail in Belton because Fort Hood does not have its own lockup.

Withington said a hearing will be held within a week to determine whether West will be released or remain confined until his trial. No trial date has yet been set.

If convicted of murder, West could be sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole and dishonorable discharge.

The obstruction of justice charge carries a maximum penalty of five years confinement, along with dishonorable discharge.

At least four other Fort Carson soldiers face charges for alleged crimes in Iraq.

Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Perkins, 33, is scheduled for trial at Fort Hood next month on charges of manslaughter, conspiracy, assault and lying to investigators stemming from the alleged drowning of an Iraqi civilian in Samarra.

Perkins and 1st Lt. Jack Saville, both part of the 3rd Brigade Strike Team, are accused of pushing two Iraqis off a bridge into the Tigris River as punishment for violating curfew. Perkins is also charged with assault for a similar incident near Balad in December.

Saville, a 24-year-old West Point graduate, will be tried in January.

Fort Carson also is home to the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, two of whose troops were charged in October with "unauthorized treatment of Iraqi individuals" for a reported incident near Ar Rutbah between May and July.

## In Mosul, grisly discoveries follow in insurgents' wake

BY KIRSTEN SCHARNBERG  
Chicago Tribune

MOSUL, Iraq — Almost every morning for the past several days, American soldiers have made a gruesome discovery. Sometimes the bodies are partly burned; sometimes they are dismembered; sometimes they are shot in the head.

When two more victims were found slumped on a busy street in the city this week, Lt. Col. Erik Kurilla finally lost it. The Army commander, a bear of a man who usually is the first to crack a joke even in the direst of circumstances, stormed across the street and began chastising the Iraqis gathered there.

"Why do you not have the common decency to clean them up?" shouted Kurilla, who is in charge of securing much of historic Mosul, as he angrily motioned to the bodies.

"Your fellow Iraqis are lying dead in the streets, and you sit there doing nothing. To say nothing is to support the insurgents. These were Iraqi soldiers who were trying to help your country, to serve you. How can you do nothing?"

Kurilla's outrage stems not just from the fact that Mosul, once a relatively peaceful city, is fast becoming a haven for violent insurgents. His larger concern is that those insurgents seem to have come to a pragmatic conclusion: that they cannot overcome the United States' military might and that their best chance to assume control of neighborhoods, cities or even the nation is to redouble their attacks on fellow Iraqis.

Over the past 10 days, the bodies of more than 20 Iraqi police officers, soldiers and national guardsmen have been found in this northern city, where winter has begun to settle with a nearly constant, cold, pelting rain. Masked gunmen have stoned or burned nearly a dozen police stations. And scores of families with members in one of the Iraqi security forces have received

death threats or other forms of intimidation.

Although attacks against Iraqi soldiers and police are common in this unsettled country, perhaps in no place more than Mosul have the results been as profound or the stakes as high.

In just a few days, the police force in one of the most densely populated portions of the city has dwindled from several thousand officers to only a few hundred, and two Iraqi National Guard units in the region were forced to disband when between a third and half of their soldiers fled, a U.S. military official said.

Mosul, Iraq's third-largest city, cannot afford to lose its indigenous security. Although it once was occupied by an entire U.S. Army division of about 10,000 soldiers, Mosul now is held by a force about a third that size, a reduction deemed acceptable because local police and Iraqi military branches were believed strong enough to help maintain the peace.

"The insurgents know they can't take us on and win militarily," Kurilla said. "They learned that from watching Fallujah. But they can create a lot of problems by taking out the Iraqi army and police."

In the aftermath of the recent murders and resulting desertions, U.S. platoons are being paired with their Iraqi counterparts in an effort to build the Iraqis' confidence as well as encourage them to remain in uniform. Together they are training for urban combat, conducting searches for weapons caches and setting up random traffic checkpoints.

"You are brave men, and the future of your city and country depend on you," Lt. Col. Todd McCaffrey of the Army's 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment told Iraqi soldiers one recent afternoon as he checked in on one of the joint patrols.

But the joint missions do not always go flawlessly. Many Iraqi soldiers insist on wearing masks



**Above:** Iraqi National Guard soldiers remove a body after two men were found murdered in Mosul, Iraq, on Thursday. **Right:** A U.S. Army soldier looks out from his armored vehicle after troops came under small arms fire in Mosul. **The U.S. military said five more bodies were found Wednesday in northern Mosul, bringing the total to 20 bodies found in the past week.**

while conducting missions and patrols. And sometimes they are reluctant to talk with residents on the street for fear that someone will recognize their voices. That frustrates U.S. military officers who struggle to overcome the language barrier with the Iraqis and who long have hoped that Mosul's residents would trust local troops far more than the Americans who routinely kick in their doors during searches and



patrols. Even more, because the Iraqi troops often ride in the kinds of unarmed vehicles that are most vulnerable to suicide at-

tacks and roadside bombs, they can be jumpy. Sometimes they open fire with little cause on passing cars or start shooting without warning during foot patrols.

## IN THE WORLD

## Ukraine court forbids release of vote results

BY JIM HEINTZ

The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Ukraine's Supreme Court said Thursday that the country's presidential election results would not be published as official until it considers an appeal filed by the opposition candidate, who has claimed the vote was rigged.

The decision could significantly boost supporters of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, who have flooded the streets of Kiev since the Sunday run-off and won significant international backing.

But it also foretells a continuation of tension for several days. The appeal will be considered on Monday, court spokeswoman Liana Shlyaposhnikova said.

Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich was declared winner of the election on Wednesday with a margin of about three percentage points, but he cannot become president until the results are officially published.

Yushchenko's campaign filed an appeal earlier in the day.

The protesters have braved freezing temperatures in Kiev's Independence Square since Sunday's run-off election, saying the ballot was rigged to allow Yanukovich to win. They received a boost Thursday from visiting



Supporters of Ukraine's Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich and opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko discuss the results of the elections in downtown Kiev on Thursday. Defeated presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko filed an appeal with Ukraine's Supreme Court on Thursday to declare the election results invalid, the Interfax news agency reported.

Lech Walesa, the founder of the Polish Solidarity movement, who said he was "amazed" at their enthusiasm and predicted their protest would succeed.

Walesa, in Ukraine to try to mediate in the crisis, said he met earlier with Yanukovich, "not as a presidential candidate but as

prime minister. If he is prime minister, then he should unify and not divide the people."

Western observers have denounced the vote as fraudulent, citing voter intimidation, multiple voting and other irregularities. The United States and the European Union said they

could not accept the results as legitimate and warned the Ukrainian government of "consequences" in relations with the West.

It was unclear whether Yushchenko's appeal was legally valid.

According to the Interfax news agency, only election results from individual voting districts can be

challenged, not results as a whole. The opposition also planned to file complaints in regional courts to protest the vote results.

The Western-leaning reformist Yushchenko and his allies had called for an "all-Ukrainian political strike" starting Thursday.

However, there were no indications that a national strike was taking hold, although workers from several factories in Yushchenko's stronghold region of Lviv were reportedly leaving their jobs to come to Kiev.

In another sign of a growing split, some 300 Ukrainian diplomats signed a joint statement of support for Yushchenko, a diplomat told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The election has led to an increasingly tense tug of war between the West and Moscow, which considers Ukraine part of its sphere of influence and a buffer between Russia and NATO's eastern flank.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had congratulated Yanukovich on his victory even before full official results were released. He sent another telegram of congratulations Thursday, saying Yanukovich's election would help "bring the Russian-Ukrainian strategic partnership to a new level."

## Activist: African girls in Europe subjected to genital mutilation

BY WILLIAM J. KOLE

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Young girls born in Europe to immigrant families from Africa are being subjected to ritual genital mutilation, and authorities are doing little to discourage it, a leading women's rights activist warned Thursday.

Somalia-born supermodel and best-selling author Waris Dirie, who has campaigned to end the disfiguring practice she suffered at age 5 in her homeland, said she estimates one in every three African families living in Europe is secretly carrying out the ritual on their daughters. No official figures exist.

The procedure — illegal in most European countries — is especially prevalent in Germany and the Netherlands, as well as in Austria, where an estimated 8,000 girls born into immigrant families have been affected, Dirie said.

"We don't know who's doing it and where," because there are few initiatives to prevent it or to encourage doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers and others to report suspected cases, Dirie said. An exception is France, where there is strong awareness and education, she said.

"What good is a law if you not

paying attention?" Dirie told reporters in Austria, where she was being honored Thursday by a Roman Catholic men's movement for her efforts to stop the practice.

Islamic religious leaders are telling Europe's Muslim Africans that the prophets recommend the ancient ritual, which involves the removal of the clitoris, often with a dull blade and no anesthesia, Dirie said.

"That is a catastrophe," she said. "Every imam who is not actively against genital mutilation is guilty. Mutilation is not a tradition — it's a crime that must be abolished."

Although women generally perform the procedure, sometimes called female circumcision, men ultimately are responsible because "untrimmed" young women "face great difficulties in African societies in finding a husband," Dirie said.

Between 100 million and 140 million women have undergone genital mutilation worldwide, and 2 million girls are at risk each year, according to the World Health Organization, which says the practice can lead to infection, the spread of AIDS and crippling physical, psychological and sexual problems.

The practice has been on the rise not only among immigrants



Somalia-born supermodel and women's rights activist Waris Dirie says many of Europe's African immigrants are subjecting their young daughters to ritual genital mutilation, and authorities are doing little to discourage it.

in Europe but also in Australia, Canada and the United States, WHO says.

Petra Bayr, an official with Austria's Socialist Party, said the bloc's women would press the government to consider genital mutilation an "act of violence" and legitimate grounds for women fleeing it to be granted asylum in Austria.

"Women who are threatened with genital mutilation or have already suffered it should not have to wait for months for an open door," added Raimund Loeffelmann, a spokesman for the Catholic men's organization honoring Dirie on Thursday.

"I didn't move," Dirie told The Associated Press in a 1996 interview describing the ordeal she endured at age 5. "I just shivered. There was no painkiller, no anesthesia, no nothing."

## Iran insists on making changes to U.N. accord

BY GEORGE JAHN

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Iran insisted Thursday it had a right to exempt some equipment from an agreement with the European Union committing it to freeze all parts of a program that can make nuclear weapons-grade uranium — a move that diplomats said threatened to scuttle the deal.

Mohamed ElBaradei, the chief U.N. nuclear watchdog, revealed Iran's continued refusal to include some centrifuges in the agreement — which the EU says mandates a suspension of all activities related to uranium enrichment. ElBaradei spoke as board members of his International Atomic Energy Agency grappled with the text of a resolution meant to police Iran's suspension pledge.

One of the delegates, who demanded anonymity, described Iran's move as an attempt at arms twisting to wrest concessions on the language of the resolution. Tehran wants any text stripped of even the most indirect allusions to a "trigger mechanism" that would enable the board to ask the U.N. Security Council to deal with violations of the suspension pledge.

But another delegate said that — unless agreement is reached with the Europeans — Iran's apparent ploy could backfire and

generate support for a more than yearlong U.S. effort for Security Council involvement.

Diplomats said the Americans — who insist Iran wants to make nuclear weapons — were unhappy with the draft, which makes no direct reference to the possibility of referral. But Iranian President Mohamed Khatami said the text was too tough and would have to be watered down.

"This resolution is not a good resolution," Iran's state news agency IRNA quoted him as saying.

No agreement on the draft was expected Thursday.

Separately, ElBaradei said Pakistan gave the agency approval in principle to inspect some of its own nuclear equipment to test claims by Tehran. He suggested the agreement with Pakistan — traditionally secretive about its nuclear program — could help answer questions about enriched uranium that Tehran insists was inadvertently imported on black market components from Pakistan.

ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said his inspectors would be able to verify a suspension of all enrichment-related programs "with one exception" — could he answer questions about enriched uranium that Iran insists are not part of the freeze agreement and claims it needs to run for research purposes.

# Report: Early release for Army deserter Jenkins

The Associated Press

TOKYO — U.S. Army deserter to North Korea Charles Jenkins will be released this week from a jail near Tokyo, six days earlier than planned, a media report said Thursday.

Jenkins, who was convicted of desertion and of aiding the enemy in a Nov. 3 U.S. court-martial and sentenced to 30 days' imprisonment, will be released at Yokosuka Naval Base

on Saturday, Kyodo News agency reported, citing unnamed sources.

Jenkins deserted his Army unit along the Demilitarized Zone between the Koreans in January 1965.

After defecting to the North, he met and married a Japanese woman, Hitomi Soga, who had been kidnapped by North Korean agents.

The Japanese government was able to secure the release of Soga from the

tightly controlled communist country in October 2002 and she returned to Japan.

It then arranged for Jenkins and their two daughters to join her in Japan earlier this year, saying that the former Army sergeant needed medical treatment from Japanese doctors.

Jenkins was discharged from a hospital on Sept. 11 and immediately turned himself in to U.S. military au-

thorities in Japan to face desertion and other charges.

After arranging a plea bargain, he was convicted at Camp Zama Army base.

It will take about a week for Jenkins to be formally discharged from the Army after he is released from prison on Saturday, Kyodo said.

The family then plans to return to Soga's hometown on Sado Island in northern Japan, it said.



Jenkins

## In hurry to progress, old fears raised

As Laos readies to welcome ASEAN, locals worry their snake goddess is angry

BY SUTIN WANNABOVORN  
The Associated Press

VIENTIANE, Laos — As isolated Laos debuts with its first big conference, residents in the dusty capital who watched a huge venue going up overnight on the Mekong River are wondering: Has all the bustle angered the waterway's snake goddess?

This landlocked Communist country of 5 million people worked feverishly with foreign developers to prepare for Thursday's opening of the 10th Association of Southeast Asian Nations conference.

"We are 100 percent ready," Laos Foreign Minister Souvanna Lengsavat said. "The preparation for the summit is ready from all aspects, both in the areas of security and facility."

A Malaysia-Laos joint venture built the 14-floor Don Chan Palace on an artificial embankment on the Mekong, a hotel and convention center that dwarfs Vientiane's low-slung skyline of houses that rarely reach five stories.

Some local residents attribute the deaths last month of 16 women whose boat capsized on the Mekong to the river snake goddess Naga and her anger over the hurried \$25 million construction.

"Some of my employees say that if the Naga becomes really angry, maybe this hotel will fall down," said Cristy Gonzales, Don Chan's Filipina sales manager.

Laos, ASEAN's poorest member, has beefed up security and urged the capital's half-million people in daily radio broadcasts to respect efforts to pull off the big-

gest meeting in the Laotian people's 800-year history.

The conference gets under way Thursday with senior ministers preparing statements on topics ranging from terrorism to free-trade plans for national leaders who meet next Monday and Tuesday. The 10 core nations of ASEAN join summit partners Japan, China, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

A 60-year-old vendor who sells food in the Mekong held the construction responsible for last month's river accident during a traditional Buddhist race.

"I think the boat sank because the Naga was angry about the hotel being built on the river, blocking the route of the Naga," said the vendor, who identified herself only as Thip. "I respect the Naga and offer flowers to her every night and ask for blessing for a successful summit."

## U.S. won't report S. Korea

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration has decided against moving to report South Korea to the U.N. Security Council Thursday for conducting a series of secret nuclear experiments four years ago, U.S. officials said.

The decision, made during a phone call between Secretary of State Colin Powell and his designated successor, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, curtailed a proposal by some in the administration who wanted to confront the Seoul government Thursday when the International Atomic Energy Agency opens its meeting in Vienna. Those officials had argued that reporting South Korea to the security council would encourage allies to take the same path later with Iran, which the U.S. believes is conducting a nuclear weapons program.

But Seoul had conducted a two-month diplomatic offensive, sending high-level officials to Washington and other capitals to plead its case.

From wire services



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Cars line up during a traffic jam in Athens earlier this month. Nearly two months after the end of the Olympics, Athenians have come to the growing realization that the traffic situation in Athens has not improved.

# Athens slides back into gridlock

BY BETSY VERECKEY

The Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece — Taxi driver Manuel Pircolos is fuming.

At a dead-stop in traffic, he chain smokes, drums his fingers on the dashboard and sums up life behind the wheel.

"It's crazy! ... I smoke too many cigarettes when traffic is bad because I'm stressed," he said, helplessly stranded in a downtown shopping district. Dug-up tarmac and double-parked vehicles pile on the misery.

Everywhere across the exasperated capital, a post-Olympic reality is sinking in.

Athens — despite its brand new highways, overpasses and transport networks hastily built for the Games — remains derided by its drivers, who are watching in horror as the city's streets steadily seize up.

At 38, and a 10-year veteran of navigating Athens' narrow arteries, Pircolos is con-

vinced that driving from A to B has gotten harder even with all the new infrastructure that was built for the Olympics.

"Ten years ago, it used to take four to five minutes to go on one (particular route) ... Now it takes 25 to 30."

Government planners had hoped the Olympics would shake up driving habits in a city of nearly 5 million people and 2 million cars. Typically unruly Athenians used public transport more frequently and put up with new traffic control cameras and lanes reserved for games officials.

But tens of thousands of residents who skipped the Games for a summer vacation brought gridlock back with them, leaving traffic experts searching for new ideas.

Downtown driving restrictions that started in the 1980s — based on whether license plates end with an odd or even number — have been rendered ineffective by an economic boom that allowed Greece to stage Olympic Games.

The government, resigned to rising vehi-

cle ownership, is drawing up a "transport charter" which includes tougher penalties, especially for cars parked illegally in bus lanes.

It has also launched a campaign to persuade Greeks to take more public transport with a new flat system, aimed at cutting commuters' car use from currently more than 65 percent to 50 percent in three years. A large portion of the Olympic cost went for construction of a so-far little-used tram network, suburban rail line and Athens metro extension.

Transport expert Anthony Stathopoulos, a professor at the National Technical University of Athens, says drivers should also pay a higher price for taking their car to work, and is urging Athens to copy London's "congestion charge" for city-center access.

Civil engineer Dimitris Tsamboulas said Greeks must be convinced to take public transport.

"The issue now is how to convince (Athenians) to change their habits and make the temporary and emergency public transport usage permanent," Tsamboulas said.

## Sight-saving surgery

TOKYO — A partially blind Iraqi boy who underwent surgery earlier this year in Japan at the wishes of two Japanese journalists returned Thursday for follow-up treatment.

Mohamad Haytham Saleh's left eye was pierced by shards of glass during a U.S. military strike on the Iraqi city of Fallujah in November 2003. Despite two operations in Baghdad, 10-year-old Saleh was unable to see through that eye.

Japanese doctors were able to restore some sight to Saleh's eye in June in medical treatment arranged by the two journalists before they were killed in an ambush south of Baghdad.

## Taj Mahal by moonlight

NEW DELHI — Few things could be as romantic as gazing by moonlight on the Taj Mahal — an emperor's monument to love — and it's now possible for the first time in 20 years, thanks to a ruling Thursday by India's Supreme Court.

The court said visitors can see the Taj Mahal on five moonlight nights every month, but restricted their number to 400 each night to avoid overcrowding, the Press Trust of India said.

The court said the temporary ruling would be reviewed after three months before a final decision is made, the news agency said.

## Japanese suit dismissed

TOKYO — A Japanese court rejected a lawsuit seeking compensation for mental anguish allegedly caused by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's 2001 visit to a shrine honoring the country's war dead, including executed war criminals, a court spokesman said.

The Chiba District Court near Tokyo ruled Thursday on a suit by a group of 63 plaintiffs who argued that Koizumi's visit violated the Constitutional separation of religion and state, court spokesman Hirofumi Nakazato said.

From The Associated Press

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## IN THE STATES

## 2 CIA foreign chiefs to retire

BY SIOBHAN McDONOUGH

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The chiefs of the CIA's Europe and Far East divisions are retiring, according to a federal official, marking the latest high-level departures at the spy agency since Porter Goss took over as director at the end of September.

The names of the officials will not be released because they work under cover.

The two CIA officials were in the highest echelon of clandestine service, the directorate of operations. The New York Times reported in Thursday's editions. The federal official confirmed the departures, on condition of anonymity.

The retirements came just 10 days after two other top officials — Deputy Director for Operations Stephen Kappes and his immediate deputy, Michael Sulick — told colleagues they were leaving the CIA. It was unclear whether Kappes and Sulick resigned voluntarily or were asked to step down.

Earlier this month, the agency's No. 2 official, John McLaughlin, retired, citing personal reasons.

The CIA has been heavily criticized for prewar intelligence lapses in Iraq and the Sept. 11, 2001, at-

tacks. And former officials have described intense friction within the agency with Goss now in charge.

Some said there were concerns that more officers at the CIA's counterterrorism center and elsewhere may be asked to resign or told that they no longer have a future at the agency.

Goss, a former CIA officer and headed the House Intelligence Committee while in congress, made waves with the clandestine service even before President Bush nominated him to head the CIA.

Officials as senior as former CIA Director George Tenet fumed over assertions by Goss' committee this summer that the clandestine service "needs fixing" and that the agency could become a "stilted bureaucracy incapable of even the slightest bit of success."

Tuesday, President Bush ordered what may end up being a major expansion of the CIA, calling for the agency to add thousands of new analysts and spies as part of an ongoing buildup in the war on terrorism.

The directive set no timetable for the changes and offered no indication the White House will ask Congress for more money to fund the plan.

## GOP lawmakers still sweating tax bill

BY ALAN FRAM

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A handful of lawmakers voted for spending legislation to keep the government from shutting down as House Democrats resolved to let Republicans twist in the wind a little longer over a provision passed last week that both parties agree was a bad idea.

They'll fix it later, when the Democrats decide to let the Republicans sweat that vote. For now, Wednesday's vote by skeleton crews in the House and Senate on a stopgap spending bill keeps the government operating until early December.

The holdup is over language

buried in a \$388 billion spending bill that could let leaders of Congress' Appropriations committees examine income tax returns.

Both parties favor killing the tax return idea before the House and the Senate has already voted to do so. But Democrats blocked a House vote until Dec. 6.

That delay gave Democrats more time to criticize majority Republicans for letting the provision slip through and for using their muscle to ram bills through Congress with little chance for lawmakers to learn what is in them. The overall bill and accompanying documents total 3,646 pages tall on lawmakers' desks when they approved it Saturday.

The measure was completed in

round-the-clock negotiations so exhausting that Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., said Wednesday that two aides fainted from sleeplessness. He said such procedures are hurting Congress' credibility with the public.

The discovery of the provision — made Saturday by a Democratic aide on the Senate Budget Committee — as Congress was considering the overall spending package — saved Congress from "a massive embarrassment," said Rep. Robert Matsui, D-Calif.

Had this become law, there would have been some time over the next few years where someone would have abused that process and someone's returns would have been disclosed to the press," he said.

## FBI interviews Halliburton whistleblower

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An Army whistleblower who raised concerns that the Pentagon improperly awarded business to Vice President Dick Cheney's former company has been interviewed extensively by the FBI and is gathering documents to help agents.

Army Corps of Engineers contractor officer Bunnatine Greenhouse, whose allegations about the Houston-based oil services company Halliburton surfaced in the final weeks of the presidential campaign, was interviewed for a full day last week by the FBI and Army criminal investigators, her lawyer said Wednesday.

"They questioned her about all of her concerns, and they asked questions regarding potential involvement of people at higher-level positions," attorney Michael Kohn said in an interview last month that the FBI had

expanded a criminal probe into allegations Halliburton overcharged the government for fuel, adding questions about whether the Bush administration improperly awarded business in Iraq and the Balkans to Halliburton without bidding.

Both the company and the administration deny any wrongdoing.

Cheney's office has said he has had nothing to do with the government contracts that have gone to the company, which he headed in the 1990s until joining President Bush on the 2000 reelection ticket.

In a related development, the inspector general reviewing the spending of U.S. funds in Iraq is recommending the Army consider withholding 15 percent of Halliburton's money on future contracts to address allegations the company has not documented all of the work it has been paid for in the past.

Halliburton spokeswoman Cathy Gist said Wednesday night the company was aware of

discussions about a 15 percent withholding but had not been formally told of any plan to implement it. "We will continue to work directly with our client regarding resolution for this issue," she said.

Army officials did not immediately return calls seeking comment.

Kohn declined to identify any of the higher officials that were discussed during the interview, but said no White House officials could be reached.

A legal source familiar with the interview said Greenhouse provided the FBI with new information about intervention on one of the Halliburton matters by a senior defense official.

Kohn said his client was continuing to cooperate. Greenhouse "is in the process of providing additional documentation to both the bureau and the criminal investigation division of the Army," he said.

Pentagon auditors and congressional Democrats have repeatedly turned up problems with Halliburton's contracts.



Legal drugs have done little to help Angel Raich of Oakland, Calif.

Reset by a nightmare list of ailments that includes tumors in her brain and uterus, seizures, spasms and nausea, she has been able to find comfort only in the marijuana that is prescribed by her doctor.

## Supreme Court to weigh medical marijuana laws

BY DAVID KRAVETS

The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — On Monday, the Supreme Court will hear arguments in a case that will determine whether patients in California and 10 other states can continue to use marijuana for medical purposes.

At issue is whether states have the right to adopt laws allowing the use of drugs the federal government has banned or whether federal drug agents can arrest individuals for abiding by those medical marijuana laws.

California passed the nation's first so-called medical marijuana law in 1996, allowing patients to smoke and grow marijuana with a doctor's recommendation. The Bush administration says those laws violate federal drug rules and asserts that marijuana has no medical value.

"I really hope and pray the justices allow me to live," said Angel Raich, 39.

Reset by a nightmare list of ailments that includes tumors in

her brain and uterus, seizures, spasms and nausea, she has been able to find comfort only in the marijuana that is recommended by her doctor.

It eases her pain, allows her to rise out of a wheelchair and promotes an appetite that prevents her from wasting away.

She said the outcome of the case will determine whether her "husband will have a wife," her "children a mother."

The case will address questions left unresolved from the first time the high court considered the legality of medical marijuana.

In 2001, the justices ruled against the states that distributed medical marijuana, saying they cannot do so based on the "medical necessity" of the patient. The ruling forced Raich's Oakland supervisor to close and other cannabis clubs to operate in the shadows.

The decision did not address whether the government can block states from adopting their own medical marijuana laws.

The case is Ashcroft v. Raich.

## Wis. hunting death suspect was Army Guard marksman

BY TED GREGORY AND

GLENN JEFFERS

Chicago Tribune

RICE LAKE, Wis. — As blaze orange-ribbon memorials started appearing on car antennas in this north woods community and grieving residents prepared funerals for six people killed in a deer-hunting trespassing dispute, more details emerged Wednesday about the man suspected of the crime.

Military records show that Chai Soua Vang, 36, a St. Paul truck driver, received a U.S. Army commendation as a sharpshooter and was a qualified rifleman in the use of an M-16 during his six years with the National Guard.

In addition, St. Paul Police reported that they had been called to Vang's home on St. Paul's troubled lower east end five times since June 2003. In two of those in-

cidents, Vang called police to settle domestic disputes at his home.

Accounts differ about precisely how the shooting began. In a statement made to investigators Monday, Vang, a Hmong immigrant from Laos and naturalized U.S. citizen, reportedly shot the mistake while wandering upon the deer stand. According to authorities, Vang said he was taunted by racial slurs before one of the hunters pointed a rifle at him and fired a shot, which missed as Vang crouched.

Vang said he then began shooting the people, according to police. One of the hunters who survived gave a different account, saying that Vang fired the first shots.

Vang has not been formally charged, but is being held on a \$2.5-million bail.

Family and friends of the killed and wounded hunters have rejected Vang's account.

# Inventor of WWII K rations dies at 100

BY PATRICIA SULLIVAN  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Ancel Keys, a University of Minnesota public health scientist who invented the K rations consumed by millions of soldiers in World War II, discovered that saturated fat was a major cause of heart disease and championed the benefits of the Mediterranean diet, died Nov. 20 at his home in Minneapolis. He was 100.

No cause of death was reported, but in recent years, Keys had several strokes and broke a hip. He was still at work earlier this

## Public health scientist Keys was a giant in the field of nutrition

year, analyzing data from his landmark epidemiological study, begun in 1958, of 12,000 middle-aged men living in Italy, the Greek islands, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Finland, Japan and the United States.

That "Seven Countries Study" provided evidence that a diet rich in vegetables, fruit, pasta, bread and olive oil and sparing of meat, eggs, butter and dairy products reduces the occurrence of heart disease.

"He was a giant in the field of nutrition in a variety of ways," said Walter Willett, chairman of the nutrition department at the Harvard School of Public Health. "His studies held up in the big picture, yes. He missed some things that are important. Smoking and obesity didn't show up. But the basic conclusion is... the vast majority of heart disease is preventable."

Born in Colorado Springs, Keys was the nephew of movie actor Lon Chaney. He graduated from

the University of California at Berkeley and later earned a doctorate in biology from the Scripps Institution in La Jolla, Calif. He had a postdoctoral fellowship in Copenhagen, earned a second doctorate in physiology from Kings College in Cambridge, England, and worked briefly at the Mayo Clinic. He joined the University of Minnesota in 1936 and four years later founded its famous Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene, housed under the bleachers at the university's stadium.

In 1935, Keys led a scientific excursion to the Andes to study the physiological effects of altitude. It was that research, he believed, which led to an assignment from the U.S. government at the start of World War II: design a lightweight but nutritionally robust ration for paratroopers. The K Ration, named for him, was originally made up of items from a Minneapolis grocery store — hard biscuits, dry sausage, hard candy and chocolate.

Keys, by then a special as-

sistant to the secretary of war, did other nutrition research, and his study on the physiology of starvation, conducted in Minnesota on conscientious objectors, provided the most complete record of the physiological, psychological and cognitive changes that come from food deprivation.

In 1947, he suffered the increasing number of deaths due to heart attacks, as noted in the newspapers' obituary pages, and began to study 283 businessmen from the Twin Cities, conducting examinations and taking blood samples every five years. It showed that smoking, high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol were frequently seen in men who had heart attacks. After a decade of work, he determined that saturated fat chiefly determined blood cholesterol levels, a breakthrough that stunned the meat-and-potatoes populace.

Ever the rigorous scientist, Keys was asked at his 81st birthday party in January whether his diet had contributed to his long life. He answered, "Very likely, but no proof."

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# Va. families offer troops a home for the holidays

BY SONJA BARISIC  
The Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — Every year for almost 20 years, Chris and Walter Planka have made room for at least two strangers at their Thanksgiving table.

They are among kindhearted families who volunteer at this time of year to take in more than 100 young military members stationed in southeastern Virginia who can't make it home for the holiday.

"It's not their home, but they usually have a good time," said Chris Planka, who spends upwards of \$200 every year to treat guests to a fabulous feast of turkey, roast beef, candied yams, mashed potatoes, cookies, cheese-cake and more.

"The Adopt a Serviceperson" program, in its 18th year, is coordinated by the USO of Hampton Roads. The nonprofit group works to enhance the quality of life and provide public support for servicemen and their families.

Most of the servicemen taking part in the Thanksgiving program are Army students doing with basic training who are living at Fort Eustis in Newport News for a few weeks or months while they learn military occupational specialties.

Many would have spent Thursday on post and eaten in the mess hall if the volunteer families hadn't adopted them for the day.

"I think it would be pretty lonely, just me and my buddies, hang-

ing out in the barracks," said Cody Weaver, 18, of Roseville, Calif., a private in the Army National Guard who is training to be a Black Hawk helicopter mechanic.

The four-day holiday break was too short for Weaver to head all the way to the West Coast, but he was grateful to be able to spend his first Thanksgiving away from home with a family in Virginia.

Jan and Steve Daum of Gloucester were happy to share the holiday with Weaver and Pvt. Matthew Hendrickson, 19, of Terra Haute, Ind., who also is learning to be a Black Hawk mechanic.

For safety reasons, service-members are sent to the families' homes in pairs, with some families taking in more than two people.

This was the third consecutive year the Daums signed up to bring home service members. They figure the more guests, the merrier.

"We had done Thanksgiving with just the two of us, and it's not as much fun as with a crowd of people," Jan Daum said. "When you can't be with family, make a family."

She likes to tell her guests, "You can help if you want, you can have the day off if you want, you can curl up by the fireplace if you want."

Other options include watching movies on tape, checking out holiday light displays and exploring the Daums' back yard, with a small train looping around the raised-bed garden.

## Flying frogs and smiling faces



Kermit the Frog floats above the newly renovated Columbus Circle during the Macy's Parade in New York, Thursday, featuring 59 balloons and 27 floats, stepped off just after 9 a.m. and began its procession toward Herald Square in Manhattan.

# Marines in Iraq remember fallen comrades, families at home

BY KATARINA KRATOVA  
The Associated Press

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Lt. Sven Jensen's U.S. Marines unit survived for weeks on military rations while living rough in Iraq's Fallujah, so he wrangled a truck Thursday and drove his men to the rear for a rare treat: Thanksgiving turkey and cranberry sauce.

While millions of Americans on the home front cheered good fortune and life's bounty Thursday, U.S. forces still under enemy fire in central Iraq sought a hot meal while remembering fallen comrades and offering thanks for the safety of their friends and family stateside.

One Marine, Cpl. Matthew Hummel, forgot the day's celebration.

"Days get to blur here, someone had to remind me this morning," said Hummel, 21, from Easley, S.C.

Two Fallujah was a nerve-racking experience, so I plan to give thanks that I'm still alive, that my friends and family are well back home, that my girl is waiting for me," he said.

U.S. forces manning front lines in the Sunni Triangle where Iraq's insurgency rages frequently live in abandoned buildings, where they huddle against an early winter chill and excavate brown, plastic pouches of vacuum-packed meals for prized Skittles and M&Ms.

For Jensen, of the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, it was time for a break. So he requisitioned a vehicle and drove 40 fellow Marines to a chow hall, where a cornucopia awaited.

"It means more than just the first cooked food they'll have in over two weeks," said Jensen, a 25-year-old from Cobb Mountain, Calif., surrounded by servicemen tucking into Thanksgiving plates at a cavernous chow hall.

They joined a holiday celebration among U.S. soldiers at bases around the world, from an air field in Kyrgyzstan — in the former Soviet Union — where soldiers decorated their cargo vehicles as floats for a makeshift parade, to Kosovo — in the former Yugoslavia — where the region's prisoner joined troops for corn, pumpkin cake, and gravy-covered roasted turkey,

and to Iraq, where fighting went on right through the holiday.

"Thanksgiving will help us forget for a while the things we saw in Fallujah, the execution chambers we could smell even before we saw them," said Jensen of buildings where Marine intelligence officers say the enemy carried out beatings and torture.

Lance Cpl. Christopher Brungo waited impatiently for 8 a.m. to strike in Mount Vernon, Va., so he could phone his mother for the first time in a month and wish her a happy Thanksgiving.

"We got here Sept. 11 and that day is marked down as a real bad day," said Brungo, 19, a machine gunner on one of the Humvees that made the initial push into Fallujah when the assault began Nov. 8.

"But I'd much rather be here with the rest of my friends and buddies than at home where it's safe. Knowing that I'm doing something important here matters," Brungo said.

Marine service in Iraq has inspired another Marine, Cpl. Jesse Cowan, to become a minister.

"I have seen here in Iraq a need for God

in people's lives," said Cowan, 22, from Huntsville, Ala. "I just wish everyone would have that. If these trials can make me stronger that I can serve God better — so be it."

At the chow hall, workers lay out two giant cakes. One was inscribed with Psalm 116:17 in chocolate frosting: "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord."

Each table had a card wishing the troops well, sent by post from children back home.

"I am praying about you" wrote Josie, from Missouri.

"I am thankful for you saving America," read another card, signed Monica Dinko, 2nd grade.

For Marines on patrol in Fallujah's shattered streets, food workers arranged delivery. In what they called "Operation Meals on Wheels," Marines loaded up a convoy of three seven-ton trucks carrying turkey, stuffing and soda.

"It made the Marines glad, it brought them just a little bit closer to home," said Staff Sgt. John Flores, 32, of San Antonio, Texas. "The operation was a tremendous success."

# For Virginians it's an uphill battle to claim first Thanksgiving

BY BRIGID SCHULTE  
The Washington Post

Imagine a Thanksgiving Day without Pilgrims. No turkey, no cranberries, no happy celebrations with family and friends crammed around the extended dining-room table.

Picture this instead: a solemn day of fasting, meditation and introspection, followed by a light meal of roasted oysters or Virginia ham.

That, some Virginians claim, was how the real "first" Thanksgiving in the New World was celebrated Dec. 4, 1619, by a handful of men who had just landed on the shores of the James River at what is now Berkeley Plantation, two years before the Pilgrims' harvest feast in Massachusetts.

The Virginia Thanksgiving was lost to history for more than 300 years, thanks in part, they say, to a massacre by Native Americans, the Civil War and the Yankee historians who "abandoned" with it.

The South's historic disregard for the holiday as a Northern tradition—in the 19th and even into the 20th century, businesses and state and city offices in parts of the South stayed defiantly open—didn't help, either.

Now, a small band of Virginia die-hards, a small private nonprofit group known as the Virginia Thanksgiving Festival Inc., says it is determined to set the record straight. But there is heavy resistance in taking on such American icons as the Pilgrims and a mythical narrative of cooperation, feasting and friendship across races that for more than a century has become "The American Story."

In other words, the Virginians haven't gotten very far.

The high point in their 44-year fight against obscurity came in 1962, when Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the eminent historian who was then a special assistant to President John F. Kennedy, wrote a short note of apology to the group verifying Virginia's claim to be first.

"You are quite right: and I can

only plead an unconquerable New England bias." He promised that the "error will not be repeated in the future."

Fat lot of good that did. Kids still dress up in buckskin as Squanto, friend to the Pilgrims, or in square black hats with square buckles on their shoes for the Thanksgiving pageant. Almost everyone knows the Mayflower. And tens of thousands of people visit the broken chunk of what once was Plymouth Rock, where the ship landed, that is enshrined in what appears to be a miniature Greek temple.

But even today, few people outside Charles City, site of the Berkeley landing and one of Virginia's most rural areas, have heard of the Virginia Thanksgiving.

Jamie Jamieson, who owns Berkeley Plantation, organizes an alternate "first" Thanksgiving feast on the first Sunday of each November.

Jamieson stands on his farm on the banks of the James, just downriver from a small brick archway commemorating the Berkeley Thanksgiving. Push a bright green button and a loudspeaker, wired to a tree, tells the story: In 1619, 38 men, led by Capt. John Woodlief, sailed from Bristol, England, on the good ship Margaret to seek fortune in the New World.

Upon landing in Virginia, they waded ashore, opened their instructions from the Berkeley Company, which sponsored their expedition, and discovered that the first order of business was to drop to their knees.

But unlike the religious-freeedom-seeking Pilgrims, who initially were befriended by the Wampanoag Indians, who taught them to farm and fish, the Virginians at Berkeley and at Jamestown—the earliest British settlement in the colonies—were a bit more antagonistic with the Powhatans. When the dandies and fortune hunters of Jamestown first encountered them eating roast oysters and wild strawberries on the beach, they chased the Powhatans off and devoured their food, according to local historian Pat Butler.



Sharon Walker and her son Randal of Lake Village, Ark., wait for their bus to Flint, Mich., in the Greyhound bus terminal Wednesday in Chicago. Millions of travelers throughout the nation have taken to the roads and skies for the Thanksgiving weekend.

## Home for the holiday?

Long lines at airports, snowy roads in Midwest plus high winds and rain make for trying travel

BY ANNA JOHNSON  
The Associated Press

Travelers didn't plan on starting their long Thanksgiving weekend stuck in airports or driving on slippery roads, but then again they hadn't figured on snow—and a lot of it.

A blanket of white stretched from the Great Lakes region to the central Plains.

Accumulations from the Midwest's first major snowfall of the season ranged from 4 inches in southeastern Iowa to 9 inches in southern Michigan, the National Weather Service said.

High winds and thunderstorms also worked their way across the region Wednesday.

The snow caused flight cancellations and delays as long as three hours at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and up to two hours at the city's other airport, Midway.

Marc Hendrickson of Seattle gave up on flying after O'Hare canceled his connecting flight to Madison, Wis.

He bought a bus ticket to meet his girlfriend in Wisconsin and the two planned to drive to Dubuque, Iowa, for the holiday.

"I just want to get there—that's my main concern," Hendrickson said.

Bad weather in Michigan forced Northwest Airlines to cancel 37 flights, 22 of them into or out of Detroit. At Lansing's Capital City Airport, a Northwest Airlines jet carrying 87 passengers and four crew slid off a snow-slicked runway during landing. No one was injured.

Wind gusts of 57 mph were recorded near Champlain, Ill.

High winds along Interstate 74 near Greensburg, Ind., caused a tractor trailer to overturn, leaving the

highway strewn with debris.

Indiana also had severe thunderstorms and heavy snow. The rain fell across the south, the snow in the north.

"We've had quite a few crashes—slideoffs, fender-benders and people ending up in ditches, but no injuries," said Indiana State Trooper Tom Szymanski.

Elsewhere in the country, highways were bumper-to-bumper in Georgia as drivers faced thunderstorms and a threat of tornadoes, part of a system that killed at least four people elsewhere in the South.

"We're seeing some hectic and chaotic driving situations—the road rage, the rear endings, people not allowing other motorists to change lanes," said Georgia State Patrol Trooper Larry Schmal.

At the Atlanta airport, many flights were delayed and a few were diverted because of the severe weather in the region.

The weather also disrupted travel in the Northeast. Airports in New York City, Boston and Newark, N.J., were experiencing delays up to two hours because of rain.

Drivers cruised through Pennsylvania Turnpike toll plazas for free Wednesday after toll collectors and maintenance workers went on strike hours before the holiday rush.

Turnpike managers began collecting tolls early Thanksgiving Day.

A survey conducted for AAA by the Travel Industry Association of America said 30.6 million people, or 3 percent more than in 2003, were expected to hit the road during the holiday weekend, even with gasoline prices nearly one-third higher than a year ago.

An additional 6.6 million were likely to travel by plane, train or bus.



LUCIAN PERKINS/Washington Post

Berkeley Plantation on the James River in Virginia hosts an "alternative Thanksgiving" commemorating what some argue is the state's claim to be the site of the New World's first Thanksgiving.

## FACES

## Incubus singer fined for weapon

Incubus' lead singer pleaded guilty in New York to disorderly conduct and was fined \$250 for carrying a switchblade in his bag while trying to board a plane.

Brandon Boyd, 28, said Tuesday he bought the switchblade while he was in Amsterdam and brought it back in his suitcase. Later on, he went camping with his family and brought the blade with him in his toiletry bag and forgot about it.

"I had finally found a use for it: camping," he said. "I totally forgot about it in my bag."

Boyd was stopped in the US Airways terminal at LaGuardia Airport when baggage screeners spotted the knife in his carry-on luggage.

Boyd was charged with criminal possession of a weapon and was released after four hours in a holding cell. The charges were later reduced.



Boyd

## Military families get a cruise

For relatives and friends of U.S. troops serving in Iraq, "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" was the place to be.

Studio audience members, all with a military connection, were surprised with the gift of a free cruise at a taping Tuesday. The episode of the syndicated talk show, with guest Tom Hanks, aired Wednesday.

A total of 250 seven-day cruises for four, along with taxes and fees, were given in appreciation of troops deployed from three California bases: Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Camp Pendleton and Fort Irwin.

Celebrity Cruises is providing the vacations, available at any time to allow for troops overseas to take part on their return, according to a spokeswoman for the show.

DeGeneres also joined with the USO to send more than 5,000 care packages to the audience's relatives and friends in Iraq. The episode will be repeated on Thanksgiving on the Armed Forces Network.

## 2 Live Crew concert causes controversy

A beer garden that usually hosts polka bands may get fined after a raunchy performance by 2 Live Crew.

The Nov. 18 rap concert, which featured explicit lyrics, partially nude lap dancing and simulated sex acts, was attended by undercover agents from the California Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control, The Sonoma Valley Sun reported.

The agency may fine the owners of Little Switzerland, which advertises itself as a 1920s-style European beer hall, or suspend its alcohol license, according to investigator Scott Warnock.

2 Live Crew was not specifically targeted, Warnock said.

A show scheduled in nearby Guerneville for Nov. 20 was canceled after the Little Switzerland incident.

The beer hall's owners, Antonio and Alma Garcia, were unavailable for comment.

## Waits hits stage in London

Offbeat rocker-actor Tom Waits returned to the British stage Tuesday for the first time since 1987.

The 3,000-capacity Carling Hammersmith Apollo sold out in 20 minutes when tickets went on sale for the only British date on his European tour promoting his new "cubist fun" album "Real Gone."

Music stars including Thom Yorke, Beth Orton and Jamie Cullum were in the crowd to see Waits perform new material, as well as old favorites from his 30-year career.

The audience seemed to relish Waits' unique gravelly singing voice.

Making fun of his long absence from London and his own age, the 54-year-old singer said: "It's good to see you."

"OK, all right, yeah, 17 years ... but you look good. The three ages of man: youth, middle age and 'you look good.'"



Waits

# "What doesn't kill you ..."

## After taking on 50 Cent and the feds, Ja Rule back to doing what he does best

BY JIM FARBER

New York Daily News

Don't cry for Ja Rule.

Yes, the rapper has experienced the kind of year that could make Bill O'Reilly's look enviable. But he insists, "I wasn't out somewhere whining and crying. I just had to make sense of it all. I really didn't understand what came at me."

Especially since it came from so many different directions.

In 2003, this one-time hip-hop giant—who racked up four multimillion albums between 1999 and 2002—found himself embroiled in the biggest beef this side of Peter Dinklage. In interviews, mix tapes and official releases, he battled it out with 50 Cent, then the top new rapper around.

And he was losing badly.

In February 2003, 50 humiliated Rule on the fastest selling CD of the year, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'." It labeled Rule a fake gangsta who had imitated Tupac Shakur and who sold out rap by turning it into pop. Powerful associates of 50, including Eminem, Dr. Dre and his G-Unit posse, also ripped into Rule.

Last November, the embattled rapper finally fired back with his own album of barbs, "Blood in My Eye." On one track, Rule vowed to "go to jail for sending 50 to hell."

But the album became the rapper's first commercial disappointment, selling fewer than 500,000 copies.

At the same time federal agents began an ongoing investigation into Murder Inc., the record company that launched Rule. It accused the label of being funded by drug money.

Then rumors began to swirl that Rule was splitting with his wife.

The two, who married four years ago, have known each other since high school in Queens, N.Y., when Rule was known as Jeffrey Atkins. They have three children, ages 1, 3 and 9.

By early 2004, Rule admits when he'd "go out in the streets, it was 'I—-you' [from the fans]."

He asserts it all came about because the fans "were misled. They were told lies and they believed them."

Now Rule is trying to set the record straight and revive his badly wounded career with a new album, "R.U.L.E."

On the CD, Rule, 28, deals with all his struggles.

"I poured out my soul," he says. "But he tried not to increase the anger."

"I want [fans] to focus on the artist and the music and not the hoopla that tends to distract people," he says.

The music returns Rule to his hit-making style, with more R&B elements provided by singers like Ashanti, Lloyd and R. Kelly. It contrasts dramatically with last year's hard-core "Blood" album.

Rule says he got the anger out of his system on that CD. He also feels it's hypocritical for listeners to accuse him of watering down hip-hop when they made hits of the songs in question.

"Now everyone is doing that style," Rule says. "They're riding the formula."

As for his label's troubles, Rule says its workers have had a hard time dealing with them. Last year, the company changed its name from Murder Inc. to The Inc.

Rule claims the switch was not a reaction to the investigation.

"We're not kids on the block anymore," he explains. "We're a company with corporate sponsors that don't like having 'Murder' on their letterheads."

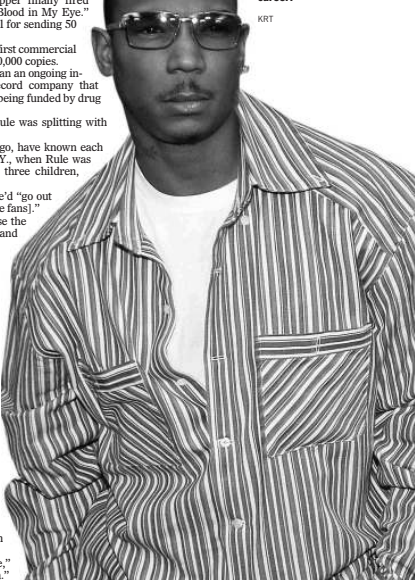
Though The Inc. remained firmly on Rule's side behind the scenes, in public he toughed out his problems alone. Some loyal fans wondered why no other rappers came to his defense. Rule claims some wanted to, but he told them, "I'm going to do this as a lone soldier, to make an even stronger statement about myself."

Rule claims the public's attitude toward him also is turning around. He even claims this brutal year had its good side.

"It made me a better artist," he says. "Everybody needs an adversary. What doesn't kill you will only make you stronger."

Ja Rule hopes his new album, "R.U.L.E." will help his career.

KRT



# Officials say flu season off to a slow start

A flu shot is given to a patient last week in Barre, Vt. Only two states — New York and Delaware — have reported significant outbreaks since the flu season started.

AP



BY DANIEL YEE  
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — The flu season in the United States is off to a slow start, with only Delaware and New York reporting significant outbreaks — a relief to government health authorities, given the U.S. vaccine shortage.

Even so, the "widespread" flu activity in Delaware — the first state to be classified at the nation's highest flu level — is a little misleading. The state meets the designation because confirmed cases of the flu had been found in every county of that state. But the state has only three counties — and six cases in all.

"From the data that we see, things haven't really taken off — it's continued flu activity at low levels in a lot of places," said Lynnette Brammer, a flu epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "It looks like New York, the mid-Atlantic area is where things are starting to pick up, but it's early. At this point, you can't tell how the season's going to progress."

Nursing home outbreaks in New York prompted the CDC to classify that state as having "regional" flu activity — one step below "widespread." Most other states listed "sporadic" flu cases.

Although the flu season can

begin as early as October and last through April, most flu seasons do not peak until January.

Health authorities have said the slow start has been a relief, because it has given them extra time to warn people to prepare for the flu in a year that has been marked by a severe flu-shot shortage.

Only 61 million doses are available this season, including a nasal vaccine only for healthy people. But 98 million people, including 9 million children, need the vaccine, the CDC said.

Each year, the flu hospitalizes about 200,000 people and kills on average 36,000 people in the United States, according to the CDC.

## Study: Protein may prevent damage after heart attacks

BY JOSEPH B. VERRENGIA  
The Associated Press

DENVER — Texas scientists working with mice say a single dose of a common protein appears to protect the heart muscle from extensive damage after a heart attack.

The protein, known as thymosin beta 4, is produced by tissues throughout the body and is already known to help heal skin wounds.

The researchers now are planning a clinical trial as early as next year in which paramedics would give the protein to heart attack victims in the ambulance to provide heart cells with early protection.

Scientists who did not contribute to the experiment said the protein might work better and easier than trying to isolate and implant stem cells to repair the heart and restore its function.

Thymosin also would not create the same political controversy as stem cell research.

Details of the mouse experiment appear in Thursday's issue of the journal *Nature*.

"This report provides a tantalizing clue toward a workable remedy for this prevailing cause of heart failure," said molecular biologist Michael D. Schneider of the Baylor College of Medicine in

Houston, who reviewed the study for *Nature*.

In the experiment, researchers at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas induced heart attacks in 58 mice by constricting blood flow in a major artery leading to the left ventricle, or the heart's primary pumping chamber.

Half of the mice were injected with a dose of thymosin beta 4,

while the rest received a placebo. Forty-five mice survived the procedure and their progress was monitored over a four-week period.

After a month, the mice treated with thymosin showed 60 percent to 100 percent improvement in their hearts' ability to contract and pump blood. That's at least twice the improvement of the other mice, the Texas team reported.

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## Snowbirds identified

**FL** GAINESVILLE — A new study shows the state is home to 920,000 "snowbirds," seasonal residents who flock to Florida during winter. They are usually from New York, over 55 and wealthier than residents who reside in Florida year-round.

Florida, with a total permanent population of 17.5 million, has had difficulty counting its snowbirds; U.S. Census surveys don't consider the phenomenon of seasonal residents.

In the study by the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, New Yorkers accounted for 13.1 percent of Florida's temporary residents; Michigan accounted for 7.4 percent, Ohio 6.7 percent and Pennsylvania 5.8 percent. Canadians accounted for 1.6 percent.

The study also found that 35 percent of "snowbirds" had incomes of more than \$100,000.

## Pardon long overdue

**MA** ROWLEY — It was 1963, Airman Richard Morse was 19, and he was in Florida, just a few hours away from being declared AWOL from his Air Force base in faraway Biloxi, Miss. When he saw a pink Cadillac with the keys in the ignition, he got in, and away he went.

That decision would land Morse in jail for five months after he ran out of town and was found by a police officer.

That record was erased earlier this month, when the government formally forgave the 61-year-old Morse for the transgression that hung over his head for so many years, though record otherwise remained spotless.

Then in 1998, Morse — an avid hunter — tried to buy his son a shotgun, and was refused, because of the Brady Bill, which flagged him for his criminal record.

So he set out to clear his name, getting character witnesses to fill out questionnaires. There were interviews with FBI agents.

Finally, this month, in a ceremony at the White House, President Bush pardoned Morse, along with two turkeys named Biscuits and Gravy. He got the news that morning.

## Plastic bags may cost

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — City officials are considering charging grocery stores 17 cents each for grocery bags to discourage use of plastic sacks.

More than 90 percent of consumers choose plastic bags, which are blamed for everything from clogging recycling machines to killing marine life and suffocating infants. But the fee would also apply to paper bags to help reduce overall waste.

Promoting a healthy environment "means we need to help change people's patterns, and that even means their shopping patterns," said incoming city Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, who takes office in January. "This is a sensible user fee."

## Gun raffle for school

**TX** LAMPASAS — A local gun group is holding a school benefit raffle featuring a deer rifle, in hopes of raising enough money



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

to fence in a portion of a school in this central Texas town.

"We're moms using guns as tools to protect our kids," said Marta Ellison, a member of the Hanna Springs Intermediate School Parent-Teacher-Student Organization and part of the trio of mothers that put the raffle together. They've set out to raise about \$15,000.

"Bake sales are a thing of the past," she said.

Lampasas school Superintendent Carlton Tucker said he's gotten only one comment about the propriety of using guns to raise money for a school project.

## House hits road

**VT** ROCKINGHAM — A one-story modular home skidded along the middle of Interstate 91, blocking traffic and leaving a trail of plywood splinters and styrofoam scraps in its dust.

The home, on its way north to a foundation in Lemster, N.H., was strapped to a Kenworth flatbed before dislodging at around 2 p.m. Monday near Exit 5, according to Vermont State Police.

"No one was hurt, fortunately. And we're still investigating the cause of the accident," Cpl. David Gerard said as he watched a crane and bucket loader push and lift the damaged home off the highway and onto a new flatbed.

Gerard said the driver of the tractor, Michael Luker, 46, told officers that he was traveling at 55 miles per hour when he felt a "wob-

bly herky-jerky pull" right before passing the exit ramp.

Once the home became detached, Gerard said its momentum sent it spinning approximately 500 feet forward on the highway, scraping violently against a west side guard rail as it crossed a Route 5 overpass.

Gerard said the only cars on the road at the time were two escort vehicles contracted to monitor the oversize load in transport.

## 9/11 coins ruled deceptive

**NY** ALBANY — A state judge ruled that a company's advertisements for a coin commemorating the Sept. 11 attacks were deceptive, state Attorney General Eliot Spitzer announced Tuesday.

The judge found that National Collector's Mint Inc. committed fraud, false advertising and deceptive business practices when it marketed its "2004 Freedom Tower Silver Dollar" for \$19.95 in television and print ads.

The company claimed the medallions were made of nearly pure silver recovered from Ground Zero in lower Manhattan. But Spitzer said they were made of inexpensive metal alloy plated with about one-tenthousandth of an inch of silver.

## Paddling outlawed

**TN** MEMPHIS — Memphis city schools will no longer allow paddling as a disciplinary measure.

In a 5-4 vote Monday night, the board of the 118,000-student system decided instead to consider alternative disciplinary plans.

"The real work begins now," said Schools Superintendent Carol Johnson, who proposed a "Blue Ribbon Behavior Initiative" that includes a behavior and social skills curriculum, and sanctions for unruly students including Saturday school, community service and loss of sports-participation privileges.

Memphis is the largest school system in Tennessee and the 18th largest in the nation. According to the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools 2004 study of the nation's 100 largest school systems, Memphis was one of only nine that still allow paddling.

## Suit alleges death faked

**TX** HOUSTON — A lawsuit is accusing a bank and 24 other businesses and individuals of helping a Clear Lake man in a \$7 million fraud scheme.

Larry Michael Nixon, 55, has been accused of faking his own death. The man known for his parties and big spending disappeared after his speedboat, "Living Extra Fast," smashed into a barge in August 2003 in the Houston Ship Channel. He was found alive in January in a house in the North Texas town of Weatherford.

The lawsuit was filed Friday by Old National Bank of Evansville, Ind., and Mt. Gene Martin of Greenwood, Ind., a former partner of Nixon.

It accuses Moody National Bank and Michael Hazelwood, vice president and loan officer at its Clear Lake branch, of conspiring with Nixon to obtain loans to buy nonexistent cranes.



## Beef on the hoof

Cattle graze on Jay Robinson's ranch in Clovis, Calif. After several lean years, California cattle ranchers are enjoying their second consecutive year of record beef prices.



## Tiny Claus

6-month-old Lindsey Mann is pushed along Main Street by her grandmother Lucy Ywarsky during the Jewett City Snowflake Parade in Griswold, Conn. Mann won 1st place in her category.



## Foggy fishing

The fog didn't stop these men from fishing at Cedar Creek Lake near Crab Orchard, KY.



## Twice the fun

Bon-Macy's visual staff workers Chris Sisneros, top, and Carol Mosher are reflected in store windows as they climb ladders to apply red-ribbon decals to store windows in downtown Seattle.



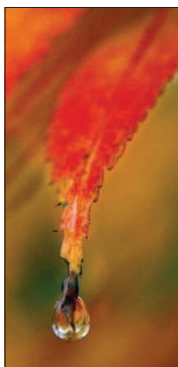
## Sailing away

Members of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Hoofers Sailing Club get in one last race on a nice Sunday afternoon before winter sets in for good.



## Let there be lights

Keith Calicott with the Jackson County, Mo., Parks and Recreation Dept. sets up one of the light displays in preparation for the annual Christmas in The Park at Longview Lake in Lee's Summit, Mo. The display opens with more than 100 singers and dancers performing and a fireworks display.



## Hanging on

A single raindrop clings to the tip of a leaf of a Japanese maple tree in between rain showers in Birmingham, Ala.



## Near miss

A cedar tree lays across Wayside Drive in Austin, Texas, after falling in heavy rains. The tree narrowly missed a parked SUV as it fell.

## Whale's diet revealed

**AK** ANCHORAGE — A Prince William Sound killer whale that washed up dead on Latouche Island in 2003 had scarfed down at least five sea otters — plus 1,000 seabird feathers, bits of seaweed and about nine pounds of rocks.

The belly of the big male, from a unique population in sharp decline, also contained parts of nine harbor seals, some river-otter teeth, a sliver of a clam's siphon and an octopus's beak, according to Lori Quakenbush, a biologist with the state's Arctic Marine Mammal Program.

The analysis, summarized in a recent report, gave scientists a rare chance to catalog exactly what one of the ocean's top predators had to eat.

It marked the first time sea-otter remains had been documented inside a killer whale's stomach, according to biologists.

## Lawmakers need space

**IA** DES MOINES — Officials are trying to find additional work space for a Senate that's split 25-25 among Democrats and Republicans.

The tie means the two parties get equal staff, equal office space and equal status. That's not always easy to arrange and, in some cases, long planned Statehouse renovation may be put on hold.

## Libraries protect kids

**FL** ORLANDO — Libraries in Orange County have barred unaccompanied adults from lingering in the children's areas of its 14 branches, a policy that is among the first of its kind in the nation.

Since Nov. 1, adults without children may select items in the children's section, but they cannot read books or loiter in the department, said Marilyn Hoffman, community-relations coordinator.

Officials with the Association for Library Service to Children said many libraries limit adults' use of computers or bathrooms in the children's departments, but Orange County's policy could be the first in the nation to restrict adults' presence in the areas.

Although Hoffman said no specific incident led to the new rules, Orlando police arrested a man in August after a 15-year-old girl said he tried to molest her at the downtown library.

## Law limits scooters

**MA** BOSTON — A bill that restricts the use of motorized scooters was approved by state lawmakers Wednesday and sent to Gov. Mitt Romney for his signature.

The proposed law requires scooter operators to hold a valid driver's license or permit and wear a helmet. It also mandates the scooters be driven during daylight hours at no more than 20 miles per hour and requires they be equipped with turn signals. Drivers must also obey all traffic laws and stay off sidewalks.

The new law would cover all types of scooters, from motorized skateboards to 2-foot miniature motorcycles and motorized tricycles.

## Bus drivers go hunting

**WV** MORGANTOWN — Hundreds of schoolchildren were forced to find a ride or miss classes Tuesday when bus drivers skipped their routes to go deer hunting for the second straight day.

Jake Mullet, assistant superintendent of Monongalia County schools, said the problem was not as severe as Monday, when transportation officials were unable to find substitute drivers for 10 buses and children on those routes were stranded.

On Tuesday, only six routes were unaffected, affecting about 600 children.

Twenty-one drivers did not show up Monday, Mullet said, "but contrary to published reports, only one failed to notify us."

Mullet said school officials will meet with the drivers, and disciplinary action including suspension is possible.

## Chicago to warn, then tow

**IL** CHICAGO — The city of Chicago is changing its towing program following complaints from car owners who say they weren't given enough notice before their cars were sold. Chicago will now give vehicle owners 21 days, up from 15, to reclaim towed cars and allow them to request 15-day extensions. The city also will expand the use of payment plans for tickets, fines and fees.

## Hero becomes suspect

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — Two weeks ago, Michael Wayne Wold was a hero as he rescued his wife, two young children and the family dog from their burning second-story apartment.

Now, Wold has been charged with setting the blaze that endangered the lives of everyone living in the eight-unit complex.

Wold, 38, was charged Monday with first-degree felony aggravated arson, punishable by up to life in prison. He has become a suspect in two other fires that are now being reinvestigated — an apartment fire and a delivery-van fire. Both occurred within the past two years, according to authorities.

## Professors unionize

**WA** CHENNEY — Eastern Washington University professors voted overwhelmingly in favor of forming a union that will represent full- and part-time faculty in collective bargaining with the administration. Central Washington University faculty were the first in the state to take advantage of a new collective-bargaining law for colleges. Professors at Western Washington University also are organizing a union.

## Tuition increase

**WY** CHEYENNE — The Wyoming Community College Commission approved a tuition hike of about 4 percent at the state's seven community colleges. Under the new rates, effective in the 2005-06 school year, a full-time student who is a Wyoming resident will pay \$684 a semester, up from \$660. Full-time nonresidents will now pay \$2,064 a semester, up from \$1,980.

Stories and photos from wire services

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## Shake depression stigma

On March 27, 2003, I lost my husband,  
Army Maj. Peter C. Graff, to suicide. Like  
many members of our armed forces, he was  
afraid to seek the help he needed, believing  
the stigma associated with mental illness  
would ruin his military career. How wrong  
he was.

I only wish I had known about the help  
available to soldiers and their families. I ap-  
plaud Stars and Stripes for running the July  
26 article "In Iraq, confronting the silent  
enemy." "Too many people see depression  
as a character flaw or as an indication of per-  
sonal weakness and frailty."

Depression is actually a chemical imbal-  
ance. You don't accuse diabetes of being  
weak because their insulin levels are off.  
They can't control that. You also cannot con-  
trol levels of serotonin. Sometimes you need  
help. It is a treatable illness. No one should  
ever be too afraid or intimidated to seek help.

Pete was a wonderful man, and it breaks  
my heart that he won't be here to help me  
raise our daughter, now 5, and our son, al-  
most 2. He won't be there to help his col-  
leagues with legal cases, and he won't be  
there to give comfort to his parents as they  
age.

It isn't fair, and it is my prayer that no one  
else ever goes through this kind of pain. I  
hope the article saves many lives.

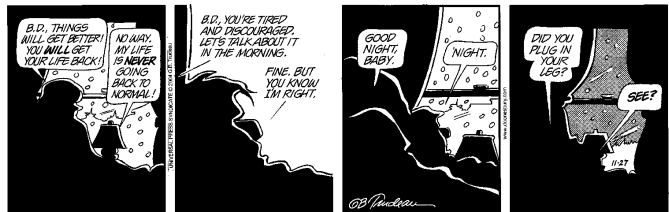
Colleen McMurphy-Gaff  
Clarks Summit, Pa.

## Kadena airman not forgotten

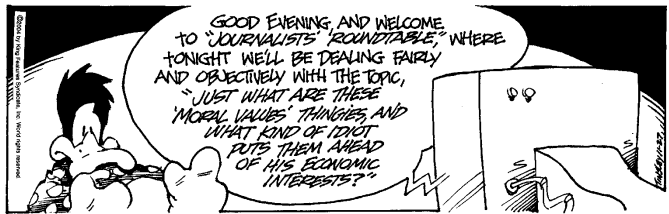
On behalf of my son, Airman 1st Class  
Charles F. Eskew, and his family, I'm hop-  
ing that everyone will stop and remember  
this special Christian young man who gave  
his all ("Airman convicted of premeditated  
murder in Okinawa dormitory attack," ar-  
ticle, March 27, 2004). He was the first in a  
jet propulsion specialist to pick up a gun during  
Sept. 11, he worked on the Thunderbirds,  
reconfigured several jet engines and, most  
importantly, he was a friend to all. His big  
smile, courage and his love for God and fam-  
ily will never, ever be forgotten.

Patti J. Eskow  
Great Falls, Mont.

## Doonesbury



## Mallard Fillmore



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or fax and telephone number. Please limit all  
letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit  
letters for length, taste and clarity.

## Send your letters to:

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Readers' Forum  
Stars and Stripes  
Unit 45002  
APO AP 96337-5002  
Tokyo 106-0032

Via fax from Japan: (3) 3408-8936;  
DSN 229-3271

Via fax from outside Japan:  
(Country code +81) 3-3408-8936;  
DSN 229-3271

E-mail: letters@psstripes.com

## 'Locked down' in Kuwait

I tend to call my mother once a week to let  
her know how things are going here in Kuwait.  
She always asks me, "So, how's Kuwait?"

I politely say, "I don't know." She less  
me know that I've been stationed here for al-  
most three months, and I then let her know  
that I've been "locked down" because of "se-  
curity reasons" for almost three months.  
I've never had any real faith in the intelli-  
gence community prior to Sept. 11, and defi-  
nitely lost what little I had afterward. Now,  
servicemen are locked down indefinitely on  
their respective compounds under the guise of  
"security reasons." Nothing specific.

My question is this: Why can a  
25-year-old female civilian or contractor  
leave her work area 200 ft from her bus stop  
by herself and run to McDonald's, un-  
armed, without having to worry about the  
"security" concerns we do? Then, on the  
way out, ask the field grade officers and se-  
nior noncommissioned officers present if  
we want anything as if feeling sorry we  
can't go?

Are servicemen all being "locked

down" on our compounds due to someone  
not wanting to have to deal with the small  
percentage of those who are sure to make  
fools of themselves? What about the 95 per-  
cent who know how to conduct themselves  
in public and would like to see what our Ku-  
wait neighbors have to offer us culturally? I  
wonder.

Michael T. Finn Jr.  
Kuwait

## GOP's morality in question

I found very interesting a recent action by  
the Republican leadership in the U.S. Sen-  
ate and the House. In 1993 the Republicans  
adopted a rule that stated simply no in-  
tegrated for a crime could serve as a commit-  
tee chairman, but would have to temporari-  
ly step aside. However with Senate Majority  
Leader Tom DeLay facing possible indict-  
ment in Texas, well, they just changed the  
rule to "convicted." That was easy enough.  
I guess it's as I say, not as I do.

And this is the party that after the elec-  
tion trumpeted its moral superiority. Boy I  
can't wait to see what happens over the next  
four years. Hypocrites.

John Lambert  
Baumholder, Germany

## It was just a joke

The response to the Nov. 23 letter "R&R  
may be in order," which was about sugges-  
tions for improving the appearance of the  
Aerostat, seems to miss what I believe was  
the letter writer's point, or lack thereof — it  
was a joke.

I know these days a person is not correct  
unless politically correct, and humor is  
often mistaken as means for another person  
or group to call to arms. So instead of read-  
ing too far into what was meant at worst as a  
bit of sarcasm, I suggest you may want to  
simply grin and bear it.

On a side note, I find the importance and  
usefulness of the Aerostat to be somewhere  
along the lines of Camp Victory's speed  
bumps and the logistics support and fence.  
None of the previously mentioned "im-  
provements" were here when my unit ar-  
rived a year ago, and all have been futile in  
making our deployment here any more se-  
cure.

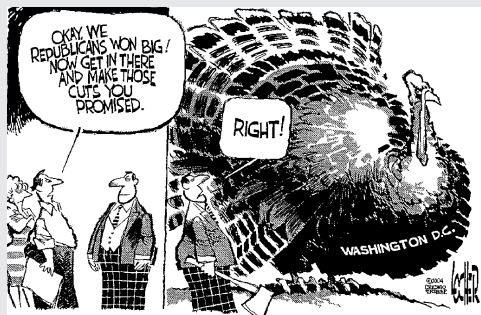
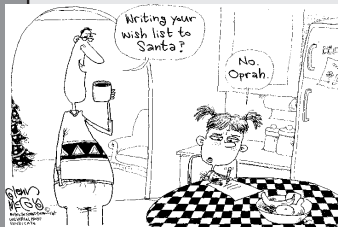
Sgt. Todd Weinzierl  
Camp Victory, Iraq

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

BY BRUCE TINSLEY

# Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



# Horoscope

Jupiter and Neptune emphasize what we like — and possibly too much of a good thing. If you already know you've got a propensity toward indulgence when it comes to certain substances or people, stay away. Whether it's sugar or an ex-love who is bad for you, it's better to not even go where it's most appreciated. You're surrounded by so much goodness to be enjoyed.

## TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

**(November 27)** This year provides you with the focus it takes to spend your energy where it's most appreciated. You're aligned with your values, and therefore, new horizons open. Finances improve next month, when you make the most of a circumstantial shift. Caution: Don't overextend in April. Spring's end features a movie, perhaps to be closer to a loved one.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Your confidence is your speed pass. Flash your moxie, and you get let behind the velvet ropes of life. Romantic matters must be adjusted to fit the lifestyle of all involved. You'll be surrounded by intellectual talk.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** A relationship has suffered for lack of attention. It's worth it to dig down deep to find your inner romantic hero. Grand (sappy) gestures are required. Pour your heart into it, and love blossoms.

## GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

The basic human need to help others is highlighted. Your contributions make your soul feel shiny and new. Neighbors and friends involve you in projects. They'll share the bounty or the work — either way, you win.

## CANCER (June 22-July 22).

When you give up a struggle, it becomes apparent what's worth fighting for and what is not. You can then choose to get back in the same fight, energy renewed, or pick up a new crusade altogether.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** You've become desensitized. Amping up the stakes is the only way to keep

you from complete boredom. Go after love ferociously! Voraciously! As if passion were more important than bread, water and air.

## VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

You've been content to hold up the background scenery for too long now. Dare to purchase an item that's extremely of the time. A touch of trendiness makes you feel more outgoing, curious and sassy.

## LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

You've worked on yourself diligently. You deserve to love someone who is just as evolved. New personality traits attract you — a sly smile, a sure-sounding voice, someone who stands out from the crowd.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** There are good surprises and bad surprises. Right now, you'd prefer no surprises. But if your karma is clean, you have nothing to fear from the unexpected. Potential loves work harder to please you.

## SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

What's good for the goose isn't necessarily good for the gender now. Realize that your needs are unique and specific to only you. The better you can articulate that, the more likely you are to smile often now.

## CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

Taking risks is what you're putting at stake, but when you're putting it on the line, how much is too much? You want to know truthfully when you're doing the right thing and when you're blowing it. Ask a Virgo or Leo.

## AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

Be aware: Your vibe is strong now. In spite of your efforts to be friendly and inclusive, you're a bit intimidating. This could cause a date to make one too many mistakes, leaving you to cry, "Check, please!"

## PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

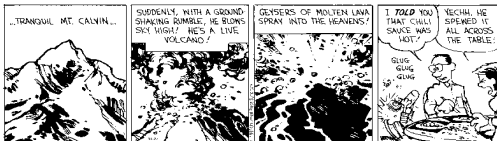
You successfully inform family and friends how they can make your life easier. Now, if you could only do the same in regards to your love life. Research how you can add few more skills to your romantic arsenal.

Creators Syndicate

## Holiday Mathis



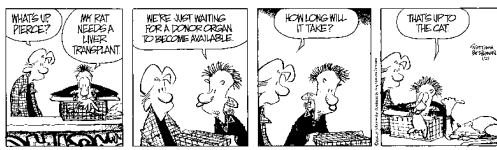
## Calvin and Hobbes



## Jump Start



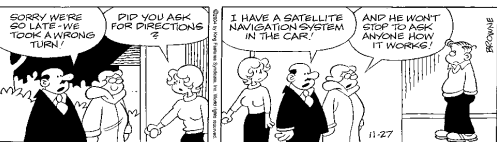
## Zits



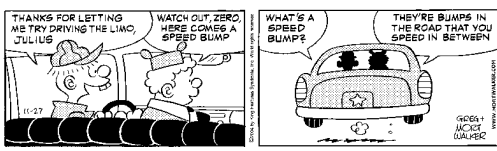
## Cathy



## Hi and Lois



## Beetle Bailey



## Red and Rover



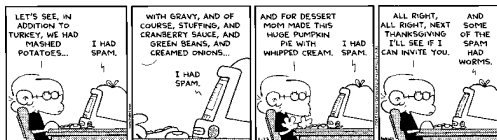
## Better or Worse



## Peanuts



Fox Trot



B.C.



Baby Bites



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



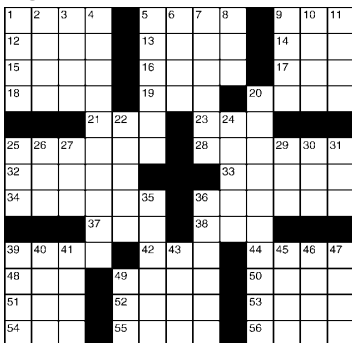
Hagar



Garfield



# Eugene Sheffer Crossword



## Across

- 1 Combine resources
- 5 Old
- 9 "Alice" spinoff
- 12 Competent
- 13 Use a paper towel
- 14 Uncouth
- 15 Nursery rhyme predator
- 16 One way to stand by
- 17 Enos' granny
- 18 "Well!"
- 19 Born
- 20 Audition, maybe
- 21 Gladstone, e.g.
- 23 One whose sweater has a Y
- 25 Lusters
- 28 Constant complainer
- 32 Should
- 33 Frequent "Love Boat" guest
- 34 Multitude
- 36 Foursome
- 37 Away from SSW
- 38 Mrs. McKinley
- 39 Nourish
- 42 Work with
- 44 Proteruberance
- 48 Unfriendly
- 49 Actor Pitt
- 50 Crossword diagram
- 51 Feminine pronoun
- 52 Lenient

## Down

- 13 Kasparov soldier
- 16 Reed instrument
- 18 Earthenware pot
- 20 Like Kevin in "Home Alone"
- 23 Playground fixtures
- 26 Staffer
- 27 Ill will
- 28 "Yoo-hoo!"
- 29 Gratis
- 30 St. Helens output
- 31 Still unpaid
- 32 Eli
- 33 Playwright
- 34 Chekhov
- 35 Added alcohol
- 25 Earth's nearest star
- 26 Shade
- 27 Silty putty container
- 29 Needlefish
- 30 Mount stat
- 31 Scepter
- 35 Pertaining to the CNS
- 36 T-shirt pattern
- 37 Seek by groping
- 40 Toyota
- 41 subcompact
- 42 Examined
- 43 Lip
- 45 Evangelist
- 46 Roberts
- 47 Prima donna
- 48 Land west of
- 49 Spelldown

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



11-27 CRYPTOQUIP

OYSU L KGFNLBINTB BDIUT  
LCLNUTB TGQSZGFR, N  
TDDKGTS YS QNCYB ZSVGQS  
L U LIVY SUSQR  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF SOMEONE LEFT ALPHABET SOUP UNATTENDED ON THE BURNER, IT MIGHT SPELL DISASTER.  
Today's Cryptquip Clue: K equals P

# Big party for baby a bit too much

**Dear Abby:** Our son is 8 months old, and my wife is busy planning his first birthday party. The party will be in February, which makes it too cold for anything outside.

She plans to invite 50 guests, including children.

Our house is small, so she wants to rent a hall and have the party catered. Is this too much for a first birthday party? We're saving for a new house, and what she has in mind will be expensive.

My wife says I'm cruel for not supporting her idea of a big bash for her son. I think that having our immediate family together, healthy and alive, is special enough. Am I being a curmudgeon?

—Sensible in Norristown, Pa.

**Dear Sensible:** You're not a curmudgeon — you are someone who has his eye on a goal and

hasn't lost his perspective. The party your wife is planning is really for her, not the baby. All a child that age needs for his birthday is his mommy, his daddy, and a few close relatives to celebrate the occasion with a cake he can put his hands and face into — and, of course, a camera.

**Dear Abby**



**Dear Abby:** I am pregnant with my first baby. For some reason, almost every woman I speak to feels the need to tell me about the hell I am about to endure. Apparently I will never spend another minute alone with my husband. My car will be ruined, and my house will be a permanent disaster. Very few people tell me how wonderful it is to be a mom.

I would just ask that when a woman is expecting, please don't assume it's a license to

complain about how terrible it was when you were young. My husband and I planned this pregnancy, but if I had heard half the horror stories I've heard in the past several months, I probably would have taken a different route.

— Mom-to-be in Southern California

**Dear Mom-to-be:** If parenthood didn't have many rewards, do you think that these doom-spreaders would have had more than one child? While it's only logical that having children is a life-changing experience, it is also an individual process. For some people the adjustment may be painful. However, for many others, the changes are welcome and the joys are bountiful. Think positive and tune the naysayers out.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69404, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Letters can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

## JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DABNY

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PAROE

DOYLOG

RAHBOR

Answer here: A

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Agrinon

First, I helped this little old lady across the street, which made me miss my train. Then...



OFTEN USED TO PULL THE WOOL OVER HER EYES.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Yesterday's Jumbles: PRIME BLOOM PANTRY TALLOW  
Answer: What the heaviest diners had at the restaurant — A "WAIT" PROBLEM

# Partner makes fiasco of finances

**Dear Annie:** A major problem in my relationship with my partner is about finances. She has said that I am a better money manager, but at she refuses to let me manage it. When she has the checkbook, the bills are never paid on time. She goes through large amounts of money with nothing to show for it and no explanation of where it all went. She can go through \$400 in two days. Once she said it was for her daughter's birthday, but the things she told me she bought didn't come close to that amount.

Every payday is a big battle, and it is taking a huge toll on our relationship. We have been to couples' counseling, where she was told that the money situation in our relationship was completely unbalanced. Still, she made no effort to change.

—D.W.

**Dear D.W.:** The fact that your partner won't let you handle the

**Annie's Mailbox**



checkbook, even though she is making a mess of it and cannot account for some of the money, indicates that she is hiding something. It could be a gambling problem, an addiction, or an inability to add and subtract, but something isn't right.

In most relationships, one person is more adept at handling money, and it doesn't matter if the person is male or female. Your partner needs to be honest about what's going on, or you might have to split separate accounts. Talk to a credit counselor who will help you create a budget and manage your money responsibly. Try the National Foundation for Credit Counseling ([nfcc.org](http://nfcc.org)) at 1-800-388-2227.

**Dear Annie:** I read the letter from "Chevy in Nova Scotia," who bites her nails. You told her to work on her stress levels and maybe get a nice manicure. You

said if all else fails, she should try the OC Foundation.

Please tell her about the wonderful products that can be brought in local pharmacies, often in the nail polish section. You paint them onto your nails, and they taste disgusting. My 8-year-old son stopped sucking his fingers overnight with the help of one of these products.

You can find them at [www.folica.com](http://www.folica.com) and [www.stoppingnails.com](http://www.stoppingnails.com).

— Mom in Massachusetts

**Dear Mom:** Several readers recommended over-the-counter products that taste unpleasant and may help break the habit of biting one's nails or sucking one's thumb.

We have not tried these products and cannot recommend them, but if any readers would like to give them a try, feel free.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to [anniesmailbox@comcast.net](mailto:anniesmailbox@comcast.net), or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

## Family Circus



11-27

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"Happily ever after? End of story? Same old cop-out!"

## GRAFFITI

SECONDS COUNT  
ESPECIALLY WHEN DYING

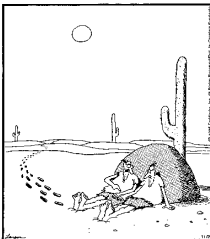
Dennis the Menace



"I LIKE GRANDPA'S ENDING TO THE STORY BETTER THAN YOURS, DAD."

© Gary Larson

The Far Side



"Are you serious? Look at our arms! If anything, I'm twice as fat as you are."

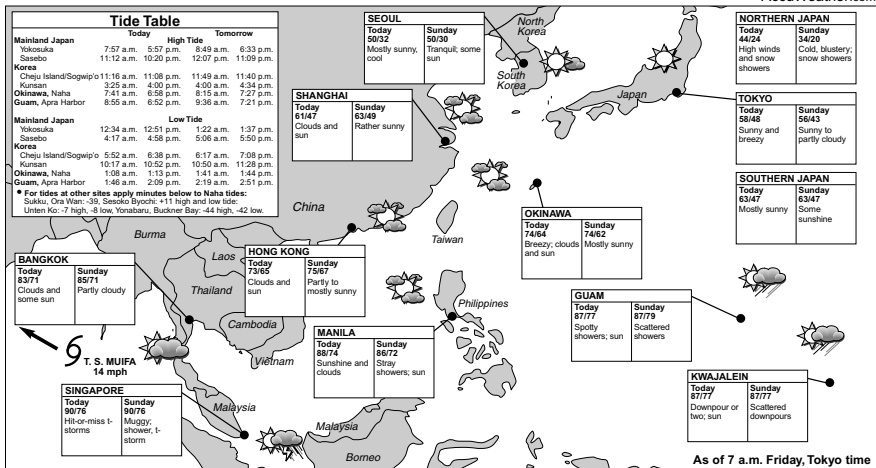
Non Sequitur



THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SEASON

26 NOVEMBER 27, 2004

## The Pacific Forecast

All forecasts and maps provided by AccuWeather, Inc. © 2004  
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## Extended Forecasts

## TOKYO

Monday: Partly sunny,  
high 53, low 44.  
Tuesday: Partly sunny,  
high 54, low 43.

## KADENA

Monday: Partly sunny,  
high 76, low 64.  
Tuesday: Partly sunny,  
high 76, low 64.

## SEOUL

Monday: Partly sunny,  
high 46, low 28.  
Tuesday: Sunny,  
high 45, low 30.

## MANILA

Monday: Periods of clouds and  
sunshine, high 86, low 72.  
Tuesday: Periods of clouds and  
sunshine,  
high 88, low 74.

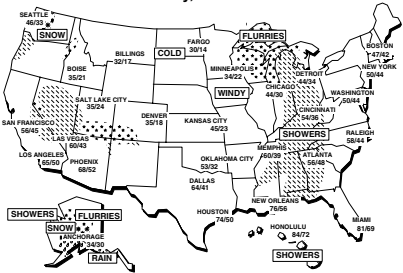
## HAGATNA

Monday: Showers,  
high 87, low 75.  
Tuesday: Showers,  
high 87, low 77.

## Thursday's USA Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Albuquerque	55/35	Los Angeles	72/50
Amarillo	65/38	Little Rock	54/38
Anchorage	34/22	Louisville	46/36
Ashville	47/27	Miami	81/61
Baltimore	65/34	Milwaukee	40/29
Birmingham	51/34	Nashville	48/33
Bismarck	42/28	New York	65/34
Boise	49/31	Omaha	48/36
Boston	64/31	Orlando	76/47
Brownsville	76/62	Philadelphia	66/36
Buffalo	37/26	Phoenix	69/49
Burlington	61/24	Pittsburgh	45/25
Charleston, SC	68/37	Portland, OR	54/42
Charlotte	61/30	Portland, ME	59/28
Cleveland	36/28	Salt Lake City	52/34
Columbus, OH	35/28	St. Louis	46/38
Duluth	28/20	San Antonio	67/47
El Paso	62/40	San Diego	68/52
Harford	65/31	San Juan	85/74
Helena	51/33	Tampa	76/48
Indianapolis	43/31	Tulsa	59/47
Jacksonville	72/38	Washington	65/36
Kansas City	51/43	Wichita	56/39

## Saturday, November 27



## U.S. Extended Forecast

A cold front will move through the Ohio Valley Saturday, bringing rain from Michigan southward into eastern Mississippi and Alabama. Low pressure will bring snow showers to the Rockies and mountains of Arizona, Utah and Nevada. Another cold front moving into the Pacific Northwest will bring showers to the Washington and Oregon Coast. Sunday, rain will spread across New England and the mid-Atlantic states as the cold front pushes through. Higher elevations may receive snow showers following the passage of this front as temperatures start to decline and Canadian high pressure builds.

## Saturday's Pacific Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Bangkok	83/71	Iwakuni	62/45
Beijing	57/37	Kadena AB	74/64
Chengdu	53/27	Kunsan AB	54/39
Christchurch	58/40	Kwajalein	87/77
Diego Garcia	78/79	Manila	88/74
Hagatna	77/67	Misawa AB	49/31
Hanoi	67/59	Okinawa	82/31
Hong Kong	83/65	Perth	80/61
Honolulu	84/72	Pusan	58/43
		Seocho	50/32
		Shanghai	61/47
		Singapore	90/76
		Sydney	87/68
		Taegu	58/35
		Taipei	71/59
		Tokyo	58/48

## Saturday's World Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Acapulco	93/75	Budapest	41/34
Athens	58/47	Buenos Aires	81/64
Auckland	57/49	Cairo	66/45
Baghdad	55/30	Cancun	82/70
Barbados	88/71	Cape Town	75/55
Barcelona	58/46	Geneva	42/38
Berlin	43/34	Islamabad	36/23
Bermuda	70/61	Jerusalem	54/43
Brussels	46/36	Johannesburg	85/62
		Kabul	57/27
		Kiev	30/21
		New Delhi	76/47
		Oslo	27/24
		Paris	47/36
		Rio de Janeiro	84/72
		Rome	58/45
		St. Petersburg	23/15
		Stockholm	29/22
		Warsaw	35/28



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## Mickelson matches record low 59

BY JAYMES SONG

*The Associated Press*

**POIPOU BEACH, Hawaii** — Phil Mickelson ended his magical year with golf's magic number.

The Masters champion shot a 13-under 59 on Wednesday to win the PGA Grand Slam of Golf, a two-day competition for the year's four major winners.

"It was certainly unexpected," said Mickelson, who hadn't touched a club for two weeks before the tournament. "I didn't hit it great today and somehow I shot 59. So go figure. It just all kind of came together."

Shigeki Maruyama carded a 58 at Woodmont Country Club in Rockville, Md., during qualifying for the 2000 U.S. Open.

Mickelson barely missed a 9-foot eagle putt to the left on the last hole that would have given him a 58. He tapped in for birdie and smiled as the gallery cheered wildly.

"I just went out and just kind of played and today, the ball went in the hole," he said. "I don't really have an explanation for it."

Mickelson's 59 moved him from third place to first, with a 17-under 127 total, which tied the course record and beat PGA champion Vijay Singh by five strokes.

Lefty had 11 birdies, an eagle and no bogeys to win \$400,000. He putted just 24 times, including 11 times on the front nine. It was a spectacular way to end a season Mickelson won't forget: His victory at Augusta National allowed him to shed the label of "best player never to win a major," and he went on to finish a close second in the U.S. Open, third in the British Open and tied for sixth in the PGA.

"I made everything," he said.

"It was a great feeling to see the ball go in the hole. Awesome."

Mickelson's previous competitive career low was 61 in the 2001 Greater Hartford Open. His season low was a 63 in the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic.

Singh, the No. 1 player in the world, shot a 66 and earned \$250,000, while first-round leader Retief Goosen — the U.S. Open champ — closed with a 68 to finish at 11-under. British Open champion Todd Hamilton finished at 11-under, 145, after a 70.

"Phil outplayed everybody — or outscored everybody," Singh said. "It was incredible. After about the 12th or 15th hole, we were just watching him."

In balmy and calm conditions at the oceanside Poipu Bay Golf Course, Mickelson struggled off the tee at times — finding the rough, sand and gallery — but compensated with impressive short play.

He became just the third player to win the event since 1998.

Last year, Jim Furyk snapped Tiger Woods' record string of five straight Grand Slam victories.

With his face caked in sunscreen, Mickelson was relaxed and loose throughout the round, chatting with his opponents and caddie Jim "Bones" McKay.

"C'mon Bones, let's see if we can make at least one putt today," Mickelson said with a smile while walking up to his short birdie attempt on No. 12. It was his seventh birdie of the day.

Mickelson, who won two tour events this year and finished third on the money list with more than \$5.7 million, birdied Nos. 13-15 to open a commanding four-stroke edge and closed with birdies on Nos. 16 and 18.

It was on the front nine when Mickelson surged to the top of the leaderboard. His tournament-record 28 on the front side included six birdies and an eagle.

He broke Woods' mark of 30 sets in 2000.

Mickelson, who had two eagles Tuesday, carded four straight birdies, followed by an eagle on the 573-yard No. 6 to tie Goosen for the lead at 10 under.



**Phil Mickelson shot a 59 Wednesday to win PGA Grand Slam of Golf in Poipu Beach, Hawaii.**

His 15-foot eagle putt was set up by a 324-yard drive and a 247-yard second shot with a utility wood. Mickelson sank a 3½-foot birdie putt on the next hole to take his first outright lead of the tournament.

The birdie-birdie-birdie-birdie-eagle streak was the best in tournament history. That run ended after Mickelson found two bunkers on the 374-yard No. 8, but he still managed to save par there.

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Connecticut's Cornell Brockington (33) dives into the end zone for a touchdown in the first half of Thursday's 41-35 victory over Rutgers.

# Connecticut plays football, too

BY TOM CANAVAN  
The Associated Press

PISCATAWAY, N.J. — Put Connecticut on the football map, too.

Dan Orlowski threw three touchdowns and Connecticut virtually assured itself of a bowl bid in its first season as a football member of the Big East Conference with a wild 41-35 victory over Rutgers on Thursday.

"Now we know we are going to be going somewhere," coach Randy Edsall said after the Huskies (7-4, 3-3 Big East) solidified their bowl credentials. "Gosh! December 21, 1998, I could have never envisioned this."

As soon as the words were out of his mouth, Edsall choked with emotion, referring to the day he was hired and asked to build Connecticut into a Division I-A program.

"I think this is monumental," Edsall said. "This is another milestone. It seems like we keep having milestones with this program because of the kids and coaches in that room."

The Big East is in the BCS mix and has agreements with the Gator Bowl, the Continental Tire Bowl and the Insight Bowl.

Connecticut athletic director Jeff Hathaway, whose school won the men's and women's NCAA basketball titles last season, planned to talk with bowl representatives over the next few days. He hopes to make a bowl announcement soon.

"I think people believe the UConn brand is very powerful, very strong and recognized nationwide for a variety of sports," said Hathaway, who had tears in his eyes. "We have been blessed to go to a lot of Final Fours and

moved the tickets. I think the bowls believe in us."

Tight end Dan Murray caught touchdown passes of 32 and 3 yards and halfback Cornell Brockington ran for two TDs and caught a scoring pass despite playing only a half because of a shoulder injury.

Chris Bellamy also scored on 2-yard run as Connecticut sent Rutgers (4-7, 1-5) to its fifth straight loss in a season that began with hopes of a first bowl bid since 1978.

"We knew we had to be 7-4 to definitely secure a bowl," Bellamy said. "Me, as a senior, that was my dream, to go to a bowl."

Trise Moses capped a record season at Rutgers, scoring on touchdown passes of 87 and 16 yards. He finished with seven catches for 168 yards and set school records for catches (81) and yards (1,056).

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# RACING STRIPES

A WEEKLY LOOK AT MOTORSPORTS

## NASCAR shifted gears in 2004

Playoff format brought new level of drama to Nextel Cup

BY JENNA FRYER

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The most popular driver opened the year with a win in the biggest race of them all, and the most hated driver closed the season by taking home the only trophy that really matters.

Somewhere between Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s victory at the season-opening Daytona 500 and Kurt Busch's championship-winning performance in the finale, a new era began for NASCAR.

The 2004 season was one of radical changes: First-year chairman Brian France introduced a new series sponsor and a playoff-structured new points system, and he continued to push his sport to the West Coast by shifting races out of the South.

It was also a season of sadness: Rick Hendrick, one of the most powerful car owners in NASCAR, lost friends, family and employment when his company's plane crashed en route to an Oct. 24 race, killing all 10 aboard.

The tragedy marred what should have been one of the most successful seasons in NASCAR history. The points races were the closest ever and wasn't decided until the last lap of Sunday's race at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

But when Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson failed to give Hendrick the title, it was impossible to mask the disappointment felt across the garage.

"It put a whole different meaning on the championship for us. We wanted it for Hendrick Motorsports," said Gordon, who finished third in the standings. "We knew how much it would mean for us to stand up on that stage in New York and honor those guys as champions, Jimmie or myself, which ever one could get it done."

"It's a disappointment no matter what, knowing that we had an opportunity to do something really special like that."

In the end, Busch beat Johnson for the title by eight points. Gordon was 16 back.

It wasn't a painful ending, with Busch, the series' outcast, hoisting the first Nextel Cup trophy.

Busch doesn't really fit in with his rivals — he looks as if he should be playing with a chemistry set, not wrestling with a 3,400-pound stock car — and he has a propensity to use big words, albeit incorrectly. That's made him somewhat of a misfit throughout the garage.



Kurt Busch, often the target of jeers from NASCAR fans, proved his detractors wrong by winning the Nextel Cup championship.

But mostly, Busch isn't Junior.

The overwhelming fan favorite, Earnhardt gave his supporters hope this would be the year he would win his first championship. He won the Daytona 500 — the one race his late father truly cherished — in dominating fashion.

The next nine months didn't go as well for him:

■ He admitted intentionally spinning at Bristol to get a caution that would help his struggling car.

■ He was seriously burned

*"This year has been one of the better years for competing for a championship. ... There are more positives than negatives."*

**Jimmie Johnson**

Nextel Cup runner-up

when he crashed a sports car in an extracurricular event that caused him to lose ground in the points.

He purred in a Victory Lane interview at Talladega in October, costing him 25 points and creating an uproar over NASCAR's off-track policing.

In the end, it was all too much to overcome, and Earnhardt finished a distant fifth in the standings.

Fans were angered by that, too. Under the former points system, used for more than two decades, Junior would have finished third, behind Gordon and Johnson.

But after years of ho-hum

points races, France overhauled the system and created a 10-driver, 10-race playoff. Fans hated what they considered manufactured drama, but with five drivers eligible to win the title in the season-ending race, France was thrilled.

Although some things didn't change — the guy who won the most races (Johnson, with eight victories) — still didn't win the title.

But in the end, Johnson had stopped criticizing the system after a year of pointing out its faults.

"This year has been one of the better years for competing for a championship," he said. "I look at that and I think that that is going to be good for the years to come. There are more positives than negatives."

"I think that in the end it will be better for everybody."

The points race was just one of the many major changes France ushered in.

He introduced Nextel as the new series sponsor after Winston ended its longtime partnership, and he settled a lawsuit seeking a second race for Texas Motor Speedway by shaking up the schedule.

France gave Texas a spring race by closing North Carolina Speedway, then continued to shift to the West by ending the Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway in favor of a second race in Phoenix.

France also lifted the liquor advertising ban, opening the door for companies like Crown Royal, whose logo will be displayed on Busch's car beginning next year.

He approved the green-white-checkered flag finish after fans nearly rioted at Talladega in April because Gordon was awarded the win for being in front of Earnhardt when a caution came out with three laps to go.



Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s season got off to a promising start with a victory in the Daytona 500, but his title hopes faded in the last few races.

When the fans littered the track with beer cans and other debris, France knew he had to allow racing to the finish.

But he also allowed a petty battle to brew through the summer over a bottle of PowerAde atop winners' cars. It was a conflicting sponsorship agreement between several drivers and NASCAR, and when the Gatorade-linked drivers refused to be photographed with the Coca-Cola associated blue PowerAde bottle, a battle of wills broke out.

Johnson, Gordon, Ryan Newman and Matt Kenseth won 12 of the first 22 races and all knocked the bottle off their cars. NASCAR told them to stop, then fined Johnson when he covered the bottle instead.

Gordon caused a flap a week later for never even driving to Victory Lane after his win in Indianapolis, a perceived intentional

avoidance of the PowerAde bottle.

By September, the oversized bottle seemed to shrink and wasn't so noticeable anymore in Victory Lane.

The changing of the guard also began, with Mark Martin and Rusty Wallace announcing that 2005 will be their final seasons, and Terry Labonte scaling back to 10 races next year.

It's the first of an expected wave of retirement, with 40-somethings Ricky Rudd, Dale Jarrett, Sterling Marlin and Kyle Petty also nearing the end.

But right behind them is a wave of youngsters, led by rookie of the year Casey Kahne, who finished second five times this season.

Busch Series champion Martin Truex Jr. and runner-up Kyle Busch will be full-time Cup drivers next season, filling seats no longer open to aging drivers.

### NASCAR final driver standings

NEXTEL CUP SERIES			
1. Kurt Busch	6,506	6. Tony Stewart	6,326
2. Jimmie Johnson	6,498	7. Ryan Newman	6,180
3. Jeff Gordon	6,490	8. Matt Kenseth	6,069
4. Mark Martin	6,399	9. Elliott Sauter	6,024
5. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	6,368	10. Jeremy Mayfield	6,000

BUSCH SERIES			
1. Martin Truex Jr.	5,173	6. Jason Keller	4,088
2. Kyle Busch	4,943	7. David Green	4,082
3. Greg Biffle	4,564	8. Ashton Lewis Jr.	3,892
4. Ron Hornaday Jr.	4,258	9. Kenny Wallace	3,851
5. Mike Bliss	4,115	10. David Stremme	3,738

CRAFTSMAN TRUCK SERIES			
1. Bobby Hamilton	3,624	6. David Starr	3,298
2. Dennis Setzer	3,578	7. Jack Sprague	3,167
3. Ted Musgrave	3,554	8. Travis Kviegi	3,152
4. Carl Edwards	3,493	9. Steve Park	3,138
5. Matt Crafton	3,379	10. Chad Chaffin	3,122

## College football schedule/statistics

## Weekend schedule

<b>Friday, Nov. 26</b>	
<b>MIDWEST</b>	
Colorado (6-4) at Nebraska (5-5)	
<b>SOUTHWEST</b>	
LSU (8-2) at Arkansas (5-5)	
Texas A&M (7-3) at Texas (9-1)	
<b>FAR WEST</b>	
Arizona St. (8-2) at Arizona (2-6)	
<b>Saturday, Nov. 27</b>	
<b>EAST</b>	
James Madison (9-2) at Lehigh (9-2)	
Syracuse (5-5) at Boston College (8-2)	
Lafayette (8-3) at Delaware (8-3)	
<b>SOUTH</b>	
Memphis (7-3) at South Florida (4-5)	
Cincinnati St. (9-1) at Furman (9-2)	
Wake Forest (4-4) at Maryland (4-4)	
Hampton (10-0) at William & Mary (9-2)	
Kentucky (2-8) at Tennessee (6-2)	
Georgia Tech (13-0) at Florida International (2-6)	
East Carolina (2-6) vs. N.C. State (4-6) at Virginia Tech (8-2)	
<b>MIDWEST</b>	
Michigan (8-2) at Virginia Tech (8-2)	
Mississippi St. (3-7) at Mississippi (9-2)	
Grambling St. (5-5) at Southern Ill. (8-2)	
Cincinnati (6-4) at Louisville (8-3)	
UAB (7-3) at Southern Miss. (2-4)	
Kentucky (6-4) at Georgia (8-2)	
Edward Waters (5-2) at Florida Atlantic (7-3)	
<b>SOUTHWEST</b>	
New Hampshire (9-2) at Georgia Southern (9-2)	
Mississippi (4-6) at Iowa St. (5-4)	
E. Washington (5-3) at S. Illinois (10-1)	
<b>FAR WEST</b>	
W. Kentucky (9-2) at Sam Houston St. (9-2)	
Tulane (4-5) at TCU (5-5)	
UTEP (9-2) at Tulsa (3-4)	
Oklahoma St. (7-3) at Texas Tech (6-4)	

## Passing offense

Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct	Pp
Texas Tech	542	354	3995	29.9	59
Bowling Green	388	251	3277	32.7	77
Purdue	429	272	3173	32.8	81
Hawaii	482	279	3176	31.7	66
Louisville	278	196	3088	30.9	88
Toledo	345	244	3067	30.7	77
Rutgers	433	278	3050	30.0	43
Oregon St.	438	238	3044	30.4	44
Arizona St.	406	233	3024	30.4	44
Connecticut	393	253	2873	30.3	37
Miami (Ohio)	383	237	2991	28.0	40
Brigham Young	423	234	2975	27.5	55
Florida	368	222	2961	27.5	47
Boise St.	297	187	2687	26.7	55
Middle Tenn. St.	328	234	2545	25.7	47
Western Mich.	431	239	2543	26.4	38
Texas A&M	302	186	2446	26.4	38

## Total defense

Team	Plays	Yds	Pct	Pp
North Carolina St.	635	2295	22.5	53
Alabama	641	2596	23.9	64
LSU	619	2602	25.2	70
Southern California	544	2564	26.0	64
Auburn	676	2937	26.7	70
Virginia Tech	568	2826	26.6	64
Florida Tech	711	2977	27.0	66
Wisconsin	678	3035	27.5	66
Iowa	745	3180	28.7	70
Penn St.	735	3307	29.1	66
California	652	3297	29.7	70
Nebraska	607	2956	29.6	66
Missouri	636	2966	29.6	66
Georgia Tech	683	3038	30.2	66
Kent St.	683	3038	30.2	66
Georgia	782	3373	30.6	66
Troy	782	3373	30.6	66

## Rushing defense

Team	Car	Yds	Pct	Pp
Florida St.	371	759	69.0	66
Southern California	282	602	69.2	66
Boise St.	296	648	84.8	66
California	400	907	90.7	66
Iowa	356	902	90.2	66
Troy	400	907	90.7	66
New Mexico	405	1030	93.6	66
Nebraska	342	846	94.6	66
Oklahoma	358	1041	94.6	66
Auburn	307	1029	95.6	66
Northern Dame	353	955	95.5	66
Georgia Tech	367	1056	95.6	66
Michigan (Ohio)	375	1120	101.8	66
Virginia	333	957	95.4	66
LSU	359	1055	105.5	66
Georgia Tech	367	1056	95.6	66
North Carolina St.	391	1096	109.6	66

## Passing defense

Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct	Pp
Alabama	239	1282	91	94.93	66
North Carolina St.	244	1088	119	96.03	66
Georgia Tech	244	1088	119	96.03	66
Florida St.	306	1589	7	96.77	66
Oregon St.	306	1589	7	96.77	66
Boise St.	301	1688	23	99.04	66
Nebraska	301	1688	23	99.04	66
Florida St.	310	1785	5	99.82	66
Penn St.	310	1785	5	99.82	66
Clemson	302	2095	5	101.61	66
Missouri	369	1838	10	103.36	66
Georgia Tech	369	1838	10	103.36	66
Miami (Fla.)	379	1406	10	103.36	66
Georgia Tech	379	1406	10	103.36	66
South Carolina	328	174	105	105.70	66

## Div. I-A individual statistics

## Rushing

Team	Car	Yds	Avg	Yds Pp	Pp
Thomas, N. Texas	270	1599	5.9	159.9	59
Benson, Texas	233	1584	6.8	158.4	54
Armstrong, Cal.	241	1572	6.5	157.2	54
Wolfe, N. Illinois	267	1562	5.8	156.2	54
Moore, N. Texas	270	1599	5.9	159.9	59
Peterson, Oklahoma	286	1562	5.8	156.2	54
Morency, Oklahoma	277	1546	5.5	154.6	54
Hall, South Florida	271	1538	5.7	153.8	54
Hart, Michigan	261	1372	5.3	142.6	54
Spikes, Kansas St.	244	1334	5.4	133.4	54
Rosen, Northwestern	247	1281	5.2	117.7	54
James, Army	188	1171	6.2	117.1	54
Seymour, C. Michigan	292	1264	4.3	116.4	54
Dorsey, UNLV	292	1264	4.3	116.4	54
Maroney, Minnesota	188	1243	6.6	118.8	54
Moore, New Mexico	227	1063	4.6	106.3	54

## Passing

Team	Plays	Yds	Pct	Pp
Louisville	886	5070	50.7	70
Boise St.	891	5052	50.7	70
Utah	891	5052	50.7	70
Bowling Green	748	4867	48.6	66
Michigan	697	4896	48.9	66
Georgia Tech	748	4867	48.6	66
Toledo	748	4867	48.6	66
Oklahoma	817	5137	46.7	66
Washington	817	5137	46.7	66
Purdue	837	5051	45.5	66
Georgia Tech	837	5051	45.5	66
Michigan St.	817	4922	44.7	66
Michigan	817	4922	44.7	66
Northwestern	787	4906	44.6	66
Virginia Tech	787	4906	44.6	66
Southern California	726	4348	43.8	66

## Rushing offense

Team	Car	Yds	Pct	Pp
Rice	508	3052	30.5	52
Texas	508	3052	30.5	52
Air Force	464	3051	29.7	44
West Virginia	508	3052	30.5	52
Minnesota	508	3052	30.5	52
Ohio St.	420	2507	25.1	44
Virginia	420	2507	25.1	44
Oklahoma	420	2507	25.1	44
Georgia Tech	468	2466	24.6	44
Northwestern	468	2466	24.6	44
Boise St.	506	2465	24.6	44
Michigan	468	2383	23.8	44
Michigan St.	451	2394	23.8	44
Georgia Tech	468	2383	23.8	44
Fresno St.	419	2195	23.5	44
Ohio St.	419	2195	23.5	44
Wake Forest	481	2118	21.8	44

## Receiving

Team	Plays	Yds	Pct	Pp
Ridgeway, Ball State	10	108	10.8	10.8
Bernard-Wood, Idaho	12	107	12.7	12.7
Edwards, Michigan	11	107	12.7	12.7
Belasquez, Purdue	11	107	12.7	12.7
Flowers, Nevada	11	107	12.7	12.7
Moore, Rutgers	10	74	8.4	7.4
James, Marshall	10	74	8.4	7.4
Hass, Oregon State	11	81	12.7	12.7
Spikes, Kansas St.	10	74	8.4	7.4
Moore, Toledo	10	74	8.4	7.4
Boyer, Texas Tech	10	74	8.4	7.4
Wright, Middle Tenn.	10	74	8.4	7.4
Boyer, Texas Tech	10	74	8.4	7.4
Hagan, Arizona State	10	74	8.4	7.4
Russell, Louisville	9	56	7.8	7.8



TEXAS quarterback Vince Young (left) tries to elude Oklahoma safety Donté Nicholson during the Sooners' 12-0 victory on Oct. 9. The Longhorns, who play rival Oklahoma A&M, are seeking their first BCS bowl bid.

# BCS race focuses on Texas

## Longhorns hold key to Cal's, Boise State's bowl hopes

By RALPH D. RUSSO

The Associated Press

The Lone Star State's top rivalry will be drawing plenty of interest in Boise, Idaho, and Berkeley, Calif.

No. 6 Texas hosts No. 22 Texas A&M on Friday with the Bowl Championship Series hopes of Boise State and California on the line.

Boise State is seventh in the BCS standings (10) this week. If the Broncos (10-0) can move up one spot, they'll guarantee them-

elves a place in one of the four BCS games. Boise State plays Nevada on Saturday but what happens in Reno is only part of the equation for the Broncos.

Texas is fifth in the BCS standings and if the Longhorns' 11 USC is in the Broncos' crutching the top six in the final BCS standings go way down.

"There's one more game, and hopefully there's two more, and we know the importance of that," Broncos coach Dan Hawkins said. "When all of the dust settles, then we'll sit back and say 'Hey, nice season' but until that time we've got work to do."

The Longhorns again are on the way to being the top team out of the BCS.

Utah is virtually locked into the top six, securing one of the two BCS-at-large bids for the UTES (11-0).

California is fourth in the BCS standings and in position to grab the other at-large bid. The Rose Bowl wants desperately to have Cal play Michigan, assum-

ing the Longhorns are in the Orange Bowl.

But Cal's position is tenuous, too. The Golden Bears play on Dec. 4 at Southern Mississippi, a game resched-

uled because of a hurricane in September.

Cal's first concern is beating the Golden Eagles. But they also have to keep an eye on Texas and Boise State.

It's probably best for Cal if Texas wins on Friday and blocks Boise State. If Boise State is in the top six, Cal would get bumped regardless of where the Bears finish.

But here's the catch for the Bears: They're .0203 ahead of Texas, which curiously gained substantial ground on Cal in the coaches poll after struggling to

beat Kansas two weeks ago and not playing last week. Cal's BCS lead is solid but probably not insurmountable. And if Texas passes Cal in the BCS standings, the Bears are out.

So Cal needs the Longhorns to win, just not too impressively.

"It's something we need to keep an eye on now," Cal coach Jeff Tedford said. "That being said, the only thing we can control is how we prepare to play against Southern Miss."

The picks:

**Friday**  
No. 22 Texas A&M (plus 11) at No. 6 Texas: Longhorns going for five straight in series ... **TEXAS 28-23.**

No. 14 LSU (minus 4) at Arkansas: Home teams have won past six in series ... **ARKANSAS 19-16.**

No. 18 Arizona State (minus 14) at Arizona: NCAA calls Territorial Cup oldest rivalry trophy in college football ... **ARIZONA STATE 38-16.**

**Saturday**  
Notre Dame (plus 23) at No. 1 Southern Cal: Trojans have won past two by combined 89-27 ... **USC 28-17.**

Cincinnati (plus 17½) at No. 7 Louisville: Tough for Bearcats to keep up if injured QB Gino Gaudiguli doesn't play ... **LOUISVILLE 44-24.**

Georgia Tech (plus 15½) at No. 8 Georgia: Bulldogs have won three straight in series, scoring 116 points ... **GEORGIA 34-14.**

No. 10 Boise State (minus 25) at Nevada: Broncos' winning streak ends at 21 ... **NEVADA 48-40.**

No. 16 Virginia (plus 4) at No. 11 Virginia Tech: Hokies end Cavs' slim ACC title hopes ... **VIRGINIA TECH 20-17.**

Kentucky (plus 23½) at No. 15 Tennessee: Any quarterback will do for the Vols ... **TENNESSEE 37-7.**

Syracuse (plus 11½) at No. 17 Boston College: BC locks up BCS bid ... **BOSTON COLLEGE 24-17.**

No. 23 Oklahoma State (plus 5) at Texas Tech: Sonny Cumbie is latest Texas Tech QB to lead nation in yards passing ... **TEXAS TECH 34-31.**

No. 24 UTCP (minus 8½) at Texas: Miners going for first nine-win season since 1983 ... **UTEP 30-19.**

Last week: 16-1 (straight); 14-3 (vs. points).  
Season: 181-45 (straight); 118-95-5 (vs. points).



Boise State coach Dan Hawkins, whose team is ranked seventh in the BCS standings, will be rooting for Texas A&M to beat Texas. The Longhorns are ranked fifth in the BCS. Teams from non-BCS conferences that finish the season in the top six in the BCS standings automatically get a bid to a BCS bowl game.

# Rejuvenated Heels win Maui Invitational

The Associated Press

LAHAINA, Hawaii — Raymond Felton did everything to get North Carolina another Maui Invitational championship.

The junior point guard ran the offense as he always does, defended the opponent's best backcourt player as he always does and even threw in a couple of high-light-tape moves in the 11th-ranked Tar Heels' 106-92 victory over Iowa on Wednesday night.

Oh, and he did it all one day after his hurting his left wrist.

"I was in pain the whole time, but I just forgot about it," Felton said. "I love my teammates to death, the coaching staff, Coach Williams. I'll always give them 100 percent."

It was the fourth Maui Invitational title game in as many appearances for the Tar Heels (3-1) and they headed back to the mainland with a second championship trophy. And even though Rashad McCants had 22 points, Felton was the main reason, so he was selected the tournament MVP.

His stats weren't overly impressive — 13 points, nine assists, five rebounds and four steals — but it was the defensive job he did on Iowa's Jeff Hornacek that set the tone for the Tar Heels.

"We talked about how Horner



is the key to their whole team because he shoots with such range he spreads your defense," Tar Heels coach Roy Williams said. "Whoever is guarding him has to keep him in front of them but be close enough to do something. Raymond is our best on-the-ball defender and his play was important to us on both ends of the court. He established the tempo on the offensive end and he's difficult to dribble penetrate against on the defensive end."

Hornor averaged 22.5 points in the first two games for the Hawkeyes (3-1), shooting 22-for-40 from the field. Felton, playing with a bandage on his left wrist, just wouldn't let Hornor get the ball where he wanted it.

Hornor took just four shots in the first half and made two, and had six points as North Carolina shot a 59-40 lead. The Tar Heels took 58 percent in the first half, closing the opening 20 minutes by making 11 of their last 14 shots.

In its semifinal win over Tennessee, North Carolina made 14 of its last 17 shots in the first half to take control.

"I think more than what Felton

did defensively was how he broke our defense down," Iowa coach Steve Alford said. "He was tremendous. He made shots and he does such a great job of setting everybody else up. Nine assists and one turnover. He had a very, very good game and he's as good a point guard as we've played."

Adam Haluska had 19 points and Horner added 18 for Iowa, which beat No. 12 Louisville and No. 15 Texas to reach the championship game.

"Three games in three days is one thing but Louisville, Texas and North Carolina, all top 15 teams, that's a whole other level," Alford said. "We found out a lot and I feel there's great potential with this team."

**No. 1 Wake Forest 79, Providence 67:** At New York, Justin Gray needed six stitches in his right eyebrow after taking an elbow to the face, but came back and finished with 21 points for Wake Forest in the semifinals of the Preseason NIT at Madison Square Garden.

The Demon Deacons (4-0) survived some hot shooting by Providence's Ryan Gomes to advance to the championship game Friday night against Arizona.

Gomes led Providence (3-1) with 24 points and Dwight Brewington added 23.

**No. 5 Illinois 85, Oakland, Mich. 54:** At Champaign, Ill., Luther Head scored Illinois' first seven points and finished with 22 to lead the Illini (3-0).

Deron Williams added 17 points and had nine assists for Illinois (3-0).

**No. 12 Louisville 82, Stanford 67:** At Lahaina, Hawaii, Taquan Dean scored 30 points and Louisville (3-1) beat Stanford in the fifth-place game of the Maui Invitational.

Rob Little had 19 points for Stanford (2-2).

**No. 15 Texas 95, Tennessee 70:** At Lahaina, Hawaii, freshman guard Daniel Gibson scored 19 points, leading the Longhorns (3-1) over Tennessee (1-2) in the third-place game of the Maui Invitational.

**No. 18 Arizona 61, Michigan 60 (OT):** At New York, Hall of Fame coach Lute Olson pushed his Madison Square Garden winning streak to 11 games with Arizona's victory.

In the extra period, Chris Hunter gave Michigan the lead, but Arizona (3-1) battled back, tying it on two free throws by Channing Frye and then moving ahead on a foul shot by Mustafa Shakur and a basket by Jawann McClellan.

Michigan (3-1) got it into again on free throws by Dion Harris,

Daniel Horton and Hunter. The Wolverines had the ball and a chance to win, but Horton's shot missed.

**No. 16 Pittsburgh 83, Robert Morris 59:** At Pittsburgh, Chris Taft and Chevon Troutman led a 16-0 run during the final six minutes of the first half to help Pittsburgh (2-0) beat city rival Robert Morris (1-3).

Taft finished with 21 points and nine rebounds and point guard Carl Krauser had 18 points. Pittsburgh won its 42nd in a row at home against non-conference opponents and improved to 24-0 against Robert Morris.

**No. 19 Alabama 90, Alaska-Anchorage 55:** At Anchorage, Alaska, Jermaree Davidson scored 15 of his 17 points in the first half, leading Alabama (3-0) to a rout of Division II Alaska-Anchorage (1-2) in the first round of the Great Alaska Shootout.

Davidson added 13 rebounds for Alabama and Earnest Shelton had 18 points.

**No. 24 Gonzaga 88, Idaho 74:** At Spokane, Wash., senior Konny Turiaf scored a career-high 40 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, leading Gonzaga (3-0) past Idaho (0-4).

Turiaf became the first Gonzaga player since Jim McPhee in 1990 to score 40 in a game. Dandrick Jones led Idaho with 23 points.

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## NFL scoreboard

## American Conference

East	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	1	.900	254	171
N.Y. Jets	9	1	.900	212	165
Buffalo	5	6	.450	180	183
San Diego	4	7	.360	180	210
South	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Indianapolis	3	0	.727	238	239
Jacksonville	6	4	.600	166	181
Houston	4	6	.400	198	239
Tennessee	4	6	.400	186	212
North	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	9	1	.900	240	183
Cincinnati	7	3	.700	204	140
Cleveland	4	6	.400	161	178
West	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Denver	3	0	.727	233	167
San Diego	7	3	.700	203	193
Oakland	3	7	.300	182	270

## National Conference

East	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	9	1	.900	266	158
Dallas	8	2	.800	277	188
Washington	3	7	.300	172	282
South	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Atlanta	6	2	.750	208	186
New Orleans	6	2	.750	211	188
Tampa Bay	4	4	.500	196	225
Carolina	3	5	.375	176	257
North	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Green Bay	6	4	.600	256	230
Minnesota	4	6	.400	254	246
Chicago	4	6	.400	255	250
Detroit	4	6	.400	254	257
West	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Seattle	3	7	.300	230	185
St. Louis	4	6	.400	220	254
Arizona	4	6	.400	177	214
San Francisco	3	7	.300	175	216

Thursday's games	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Chicago at Houston	10	10	10	10
Sunday's games	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Tennessee at Dallas	10	10	10	10
Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants	10	10	10	10
Atlanta at Cincinnati	10	10	10	10
San Diego at Kansas City	10	10	10	10
Jacksonville at Minnesota	10	10	10	10
Carolina at Arizona	10	10	10	10
Buffalo at Seattle	10	10	10	10
Denver at Tampa Bay	10	10	10	10
Miami at San Francisco	10	10	10	10
Baltimore at New England	10	10	10	10
Oakland at Denver	10	10	10	10

Monday's game	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
St. Louis at Green Bay	10	10	10	10
Thursday's game	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Arizona at Detroit	10	10	10	10
San Francisco at N.Y. Jets	10	10	10	10
Chicago at Cleveland	10	10	10	10
Tennessee at Indianapolis	10	10	10	10
San Francisco at St. Louis	10	10	10	10
Carolina at Tampa Bay	10	10	10	10
Denver at Washington	10	10	10	10
Green Bay at Philadelphia	10	10	10	10
Seattle at Jacksonville	10	10	10	10
Dallas at Miami	10	10	10	10

Thursday	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Colts 41, Lions 9	13	14	14	9
Indianapolis	13	14	14	9
Detroit	13	14	14	9

First Quarter	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Ind-Stokley 4 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	7	0	0	0
Det-Harrison 20, 7:16	7	0	0	0
Ind-Stokley 12 pass from Manning (kick blocked)	14	0	0	0
Det-Harrison 34, 4:49	14	7	7	7

Second Quarter	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Ind-Stokley 45 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	20	7	7	7
Ind-Harrison 11 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	27	7	7	7
Ind-Harrison 22, 3:00	27	7	7	7

Third Quarter	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Ind-Harrison 10 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	37	7	7	7
Ind-Harrison 5 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	44	7	7	7

Fourth Quarter	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Ind-Stokley 45 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	49	7	7	7
Ind-Harrison 11 pass from Manning (Vanderjaght kick)	56	7	7	7

Final Score	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Total Net Yards	291	216	291	216
Passing	243	118	243	118
Punting	1-4	7-1	1-4	7-1
Kickoff returns	2-48	5-102	2-48	5-102
Interceptions	1-0	1-0	1-0	1-0
Comp-Att-Int	24-31-0	25-35-1	24-31-0	25-35-1
Fumbles-Lost	5-4	3-4	5-4	3-4
Penalties-Yards	5-40	10-60	5-40	10-60
Time of Possession	31:12	28:48	31:12	28:48

Individual Statistics	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Rushing—A.J. Munro, 24 yards; 2-12, Wayne Harrison, 11 yards; 1-10, Detroit; James 12 yards, 3-15; McMahon, 2 yards.	24	12	24	12
Receiving—Wayne Harrison 11, 127 yards; 3-21, Wayne Harrison 11, 127 yards; 3-21, Wayne Harrison 11, 127 yards; 3-21, Wayne Harrison 11, 127 yards.	11	127	11	127
Passing—Wayne Harrison 3-21, 127 yards; 3-21, Wayne Harrison 3-21, 127 yards; 3-21, Wayne Harrison 3-21, 127 yards; 3-21, Wayne Harrison 3-21, 127 yards.	3	127	3	127
Interceptions—St. Louis, 1-0; St. Louis, 1-0; St. Louis, 1-0; St. Louis, 1-0.	1	0	1	0
Fumbles—St. Louis, 1-0; St. Louis, 1-0; St. Louis, 1-0; St. Louis, 1-0.	1	0	1	0

Most TD passes in a season	Ind	Det	Ind	Det
Dan Marino, Miami 1984	48	48	48	48
Drew Brees, New Orleans 2001	41	41	41	41
Peyton Manning, Indianapolis 2004	41	41	41	41
Tom Brady, New England 2001	41	41	41	41
Brett Favre, Green Bay 1996	39	39	39	39

## Falcons hunting for fourth banner

BY PAUL NEWBERRY

The Associated Press

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — Championships are a rarity and these parts.

The Atlanta Falcons have three banners hanging from the roof of the Georgia Dome — two for division titles, another for their lone NFC crown in 1998.

Barring a major collapse, they'll have to make room for another.

With six games to go, the Falcons (8-2) lead the NFC South by four games. They can clinch the division by beating New Orleans on Sunday and Tampa Bay the following week.

"We'd be lying if we told you we didn't look to see where we are. Sure, we look at it," defensive tackle Chad Lavalais said after practice Wednesday. "But we're not consumed by it. We know where we're at and how we got there."

The Falcons had been in the division 15 seasons when they won their first division title in 1980. Eighteen years passed before they claimed their second, a springboard to the only Super Bowl appearance in franchise history.

Now, No. 3 is right in their grasp.

"Sure, winning the division is one of our goals," cornerback Kevin Mathis said. "But that's not our ultimate goal. Our ultimate goal is to be in the Super Bowl."

Coach Jim Mora, who has done a masterful job of reviving a team that went 5-11 last season, refuses to acknowledge the Falcons' comfortable position in the standings.

He hasn't talked about it with the players and doesn't see any need to bring it up.

"I don't believe there's anyone in this organization who feels like we've accomplished a dang thing," Mora said. "We have not assured ourselves a playoff berth. We have not wrapped up the division. We have not gotten our

selves a first-round bye. We have not gotten ourselves a home game. We have not gotten home-field advantage. All we've done is win enough games to be in first place with six to go."

Still, the Falcons have put themselves in an enviable position.

The schedule is favorable, with the next five games against teams with losing records — New Orleans (4-6), Tampa Bay (4-6), Oakland (3-7), Carolina (3-7) and New Orleans again (Saturday).

The Saints are more focused on a wild-card berth than trying to catch the Falcons.

"There's an opportunity for us, but it's going to be tough," New Orleans quarterback Aaron Brooks said. "We would have to run the ball and receive some help along the way."

With a solid hold on the division, the Falcons can work toward getting a first-round bye in the playoffs. They need to finish in the top two of the NFC, currently holding the second spot behind East-leading Philadelphia (9-1).

No other team is within two games of Atlanta, The Falcons' last playoff appearance came two years ago, when they sneaked in a wild-card spot.

They became the first visiting team to win a postseason game at Green Bay's Lambeau Field, but lost the following week in Philadelphia.

Now, in mind, tight end Alge Crumpler hopes the Falcons get to play at least one playoff game at the Georgia Dome. Two would be even better.

"I know how our crowds have been this season. If we can get some home games in the playoffs, just imagine what kind of excitement there would be," Crumpler said. "If anyone gets complacent, I'll be the first one to make sure it doesn't happen."

## Feast: Colts maul Lions

FEAST, FROM BACK PAGE

Detroit and its quarterback are headed in the opposite direction.

A month ago, the Lions were being praised for their turnaround after winning an NFL-low 10 games the past three years.

They have since reverted to their old ways.

Joey Harrington was 14 of 23 for 156 yards before he was benched in favor of McMahon last Sunday.

No such problems for the Colts. Harrison caught 12 passes for 127 yards, and Stokley had five receptions for 57 yards. Edgerrin James had 23 carries for 105 yards.

Stokley caught three TD passes in the first half, and Harrison had one to help the Colts take a 27-9 lead at the break.

Lions returner Eddie Drummond, who has scored on four punt and kickoff returns this season, left at the start of the second

half with a shoulder injury that might end his season. Things got so bad for the Lions that Drummond's replacement, Reggie Swinton, fumbled on a punt return and the ball was eventually recovered by Colts punter Hunter Smith.

Detroit's subdued fans came to life when Harrington was replaced by McMahon late in the third quarter. But McMahon couldn't help the offense, going 11 of 15 for 105 yards and the game-ending interception.

McMahon said despite the change, Harrington has not lost his job.

"I thought Joey did OK, but the score gave away from us, so I saw an opportunity to get Mike some much-deserved playing time," Mariucci said.

Kevin Jones ran for 99 yards on 12 carries for the Lions, and fell to 33-30-2 in their traditional Thanksgiving Day home games.

The Colts handed Detroit its most lopsided loss in the history.



Bucs wide receiver Joe Jurevicius pulls in a touchdown pass last Sunday. The soft-spoken receiver is excited about his 3-month-old daughter and eager to help the Buccaneers turn their season around.

## Jurevicius enjoying his second chances

BY FRED GOODALL

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Joe Jurevicius kneels in the end zone before each game, writes his late son's first initial in the turf and reminds himself how fortunate he is to have a second chance to be a father and a football player.

Tampa Bay's soft-spoken receiver is back after being sidelined nearly a year by injuries. He's excited about his 3-month-old daughter and eager to help the Buccaneers turn their season around.

"It's very gratifying. You realize how much you love this game when you're away from it," Jurevicius said.

"One hand you realize you won't be able to play forever. On the other hand, you want to play as long as you can. When you have injury after injury, stemming from one injury, it plays with your mind."

An extremely private guy who briefly ended his life to the public when his son was born with a neurodegenerative disease during Tampa Bay's Super Bowl run two years ago, Jurevicius was poised to have a breakout season in 2003 before a torn knee ligament shut him down in the second game.

When he tried to come back too soon, he hurt the knee again and had surgery. Six months later, he developed a back problem that also required surgery and forced him to sit out the first six games of this season on the reserve/non-football injury list.

He never doubted he'd return and be a productive player again.

"The one thing I've learned is you've got to remain positive."

Things don't always go your way," said Jurevicius, who adjusted the way he walked after knee surgery and is convinced that's what created his back problems.

For whatever reason, Jurevicius has a roadblock. I had a building in my path. I had to be patient. I had to work around matters, stay focused on what I wanted to do — and that was to get better and get on the field."

The Bucs (4-6) are 3-1 since he returned, and the 29-year-old is coming off a five-catch, two-touchdown performance in a 35-3 rout of San Francisco. The TDs were

his first since he scored two in last year's season opener at Philadelphia.

He celebrated one score against the 49ers by giving the ball to an Air Force captain standing behind the end zone. He did a little jig after the other TD, but kept the ball with plans with paint it pink and give it to his daughter, Caroline, born during training camp.

"To me, my family is my priority. It's not football, family. It's family, football," Jurevicius said. "But I'd be lying if I said one didn't motivate the other."

The initials "MJW" are tattooed on the receiver's left biceps in memory of his late son, Michael William, who was born during the playoffs in January 2003. The infant died a few weeks after Joe Bucs beat Oakland in the Super Bowl.

Last Sunday, he felt his son was with him when he scored against the 49ers.

"I've got an angel upstairs," Jurevicius said. "Michael's my man. I always write the initial of his first name in the end zone before each game just so he can come for a ride with his dad."

He also wrote the initials of his first name in the end zone before each game just so he can come for a ride with his dad.

And he's excited about the prospect of being more involved in the offense down the stretch.

Jurevicius hurt his knee in a collision with teammate Mike Alstott, who injured his neck on the catch, Jurevicius has 11 receptions for 149 yards in four games.

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# Dolphins discuss Williams

## Team split on star's return

BY GREG BEACHAM  
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Just when the Miami Dolphins thought they were done talking about Ricky Williams, news of the wayward running back's imminent return to the NFL put him back in his former teammates' thoughts Wednesday.

And not all of them were happy to be thinking and talking about whether Ricky will run for the Dolphins again.

Even during a week away from South Florida, the Dolphins couldn't get away from the specter of Williams, who stunned the team with his abrupt retirement before training camp. His departure precipitated Miami's freefall into its first losing season in 16 years, leading to coach Dave Wannstedt's resignation two weeks ago.

Defensive end Jason Taylor was among Williams' harshest critics when the running back walked away. When asked how Williams might be welcomed back to Miami, Taylor essentially bit his tongue.

"I don't know. Everybody is different," Taylor said. "Everybody has different opinions of the situation. If it happens, then we'll deal with it then, but everyone's reaction is going to be different."

# 49ers' Erickson says his job is secure

From wire reports

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — With a 1-9 record and persistent rumors about his job security, San Francisco 49ers coach Dennis Erickson said Wednesday that team management has assured him his job is safe for 2005.

When asked if he has been told he would be back next season, Erickson said: "Oh, yeah. I mean there's no question about that. Like I've said, we have a long-term plan and we go ahead and go from there."

But he immediately added: "People can change their mind, you know that. A lot of people change their minds."

Heading into Sunday's home game against the Miami Dolphins, Erickson is 8-18 since getting a five-year, \$12.5 million contract to coach the 2003 season. His NFL record is 39-51 (433), including a four-year stint with the Seattle Seahawks.

The 49ers' struggles the year they have much to do with the team's overhauled roster. General Manager Terry Donahue bid farewell to several veterans last offseason as part of the team's plan to handle the salary cap, and with that in mind, Erickson's bosses have determined the coach is not to blame for what could be the worst 49ers season in franchise history.

Owner John York, through spokesman Sam Singer, confirmed Erickson's version of his job status.

"That's the correct. There have been zero discussions otherwise," Singer said.

During the weekend, reports surfaced linking Erickson to the vacancy at the University of Washington. Quoting an anonymous source, profootballtalk.com said Erickson was headed for

While the Dolphins (1-9) were holed up in a San Francisco hotel this week preparing for Sunday's game against the 49ers, Williams was taking holistic medicine classes at a school about 180 miles northeast of the Bay Area — and his lawyer was working out a deal to get Williams back in the league.

According to his lawyer, Williams hopes to move from the retired list to the suspended list Dec. 5, when he'll serve his four-game suspension for violating the league's substance-abuse rules.

After that, he would be under contract to Miami again — and the Dolphins would be forced to decide whether to welcome back a player who quit on them, or work out the best trade possible for a talented player with serious drawbacks to potential suitors.

Or release Williams.

Given the Dolphins' dismal season and non-existent running game, most of the players feel they're in no position to pass judgment on Williams — and not all of the Dolphins share Taylor's animus.

"As a teammate, I'd welcome him," defensive end David Bowens said. "I'm cool with it. First, he owes an apology. It's about his teammates. (But) I'm always a forgiver. It's something for Rick and the guys upstairs. It's obviously going to be a hard season."

The Dolphins never found an effective re-



Ricky Williams, leaving a college for holistic medicine in Grass Valley, Calif., will begin serving a four-game suspension on Dec. 5, clearing the way for his return in 2005.

placement for Williams, who rushed for 3,225 yards in two seasons with Miami.

Sammy Morris has started the past five games and is averaging 3.6 yards per carry, while Travis Minor is hobbled by the sprained ankle that sidelined him for five weeks. Morris missed the Dolphins' practice on Wednesday with a rib injury.

## NFL injury update

Injuries to prominent NFL players, followed by team's prognosis. (See Page 33 for injury report provided by the league.)

**Rams:** RB Jamal Lewis (sprained ankle) out for Sunday.

**Raiders:** LB Mike Barrow (knee) out for season.

**Seahawks:** QB Matt Hasselbeck (leg) questionable.

**Steelers:** WR Plaxico Burress (hamstring) out for Sunday.

**Texans:** RB Chris Brown (toe) questionable.

Washington and that the only question was whether he would finish the season or leave early to get a head start on recruiting for the Huskies.

Erickson has vehemently denied interest in the Washington opening, saying, "I'm going to finish this thing and do what I came to do."

A spokesman from the University of Washington said that the school would not comment on its coaching vacancy.

## Leftwich will start vs. Vikings

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Byron Leftwich got the go-ahead Wednesday from coach Jack Del Rio to make his first start in three weeks when the Jaguars play at Minnesota on Sunday.

Leftwich has missed the past two games with a knee injury.

"He was able to work in all pads and around, pretty well," Del Rio said following Wednesday's workout. "He threw the ball accurately and made good decisions. I basically picked up where he left off a little bit, so we're glad to see that."

## Staley to replace Bettis in Steelers' starting backfield

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers are about to reward Jerome Bettis for one of the best three-game stretches of his career with some time off, even if he doesn't want it.

With Duce Staley expected to play Sunday against the Washington Redskins (3-7) after missing Tuesday's game with a hamstring, Bettis returns to the bench as the Steelers (9-1) go for their ninth consecutive victory.

"Obviously, the Bus has been selling unbelievable, but it's going to be nice to have some rest back there for Jerome," rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger said.

Despite passing Tony Dorsett

on Sunday to move into fifth place in NFL career rushing with 12,663 yards — the New York Jets' Curtis Martin is right behind him — Bettis has been benched each of the past two seasons.

Bettis averaged 127 yards against Philadelphia, Cleveland and Cincinnati, 26 more yards than Staley's average, though Staley has four 100-yard games in his past five starts.

"This is nice job," Bettis said. Staley said, "I strongly believe we have the best 1-2 combination in the league."

## Raiders WR Porter intends to test free-agent market

ALAMEDA, Calif. — With his team almost certain to miss the playoffs for a second straight year and with plans to opt out of his contract at the end of the season, Oakland Raiders wide receiver Jerry Porter intends to get in the market for free agency.

His producer? Himself. "Every game is a free-agent audition for me," said Porter, who leads the Raiders (3-7) in receptions and yards per catch. "I mean, I'm trying to go out and put the best product I can put out there on the field."

A second-round draft choice in 2000, Porter spent his first four years in the NFL as a well-paid understudy to Tim Brown and Jerry Rice. When Brown was released in the offseason and

Rice was sent packing to Seattle during a midseason trade, the door was open for Porter to assume the No. 1 spot.

He has done that to a certain extent with 38 receptions for 523 yards and one touchdown. At that pace, Porter will finish with career-high marks for catches and yardage.

## Dolphins LB Thomas doubtful; QB Feeley plans to play

SAN FRANCISCO — Miami Dolphins linebacker Zach Thomas is doubtful for their upcoming game against the 49ers after missing practice Wednesday with a hamstring injury.

Thomas, a five-time Pro Bowl selection, leads Miami with 131 tackles. He has made at least 11 tackles in every game.

Quarterback A.J. Feeley, who played through a painful injury to his back and buttocks last week in Seattle, is listed as questionable, but plans to play with the help of pain-blocking injections.

Sage Rosenfels is the backup, and the Dolphins signed veteran Jason Garrett on Wednesday.

"I'm surprised how well it went," Feeley said after Wednesday's practice. "It all worked out right. Everything was crisp. There's no question about (starting Sunday). I feel really 'big' for (Fiedler). There's no one on this team who has more respect for him than I do."

## Jets GM gets extension

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. — New York Jets General Manager Jerry Bradway received a two-year contract extension Thursday that will keep him in the organization through 2007.

Bradway was unavailable for comment Thursday but released a statement in which he said, "We have laid a foundation here we believe will be successful for years to come."

# Three players back up Claret's claims

The Associated Press

Three former Ohio State football players backed up some of Maurice Clarett's allegations that players received improper benefits while on the team, ESPN.com reported Wednesday night.

Carolina Panthers wide receiver Drew Carter, former OSU linebacker Fred Pagac Jr. and former Buckeyes fullback Jack Tucker said in a story posted on the Web site that they knew of tutors who completed homework for players. Carter said he was overpaid for working odd jobs.

Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger and sports information director Steve Snapp did not immediately return messages left by The Associated Press late Wednesday night.

But Snapp told ESPN.com he thought the story was "another example of selective journalism on (ESPN's) part and an attempt to run an unbalanced story."

Pagac's father, Fred Sr., was an assistant coach at Ohio State for 19 years. Tucker was an Academic All-Big Ten pick.

"There are always people who will help you and cross the line to make sure you're saying in the report," Tye personally said it happen. You had tutors who if you asked them for help writing a paper they'd end up writing it. You'd go in and ask help about specifics, and then it would end up getting written."

Carter told ESPN.com that he got paid quite a bit of money for sweeping, cleaning up stuff, doing like very, very light work."

In an interview with ESPN The Magazine earlier this month, Clarett accused coach Jim Tressel, his staff and school boosters of arranging for him to get passing grades, cars, and thousands of dollars, including for bogus summer jobs.

The school denied the claims, and some former players told ESPN they never saw any wrongdoing in the Ohio State program. Carter, Pagac and Tucker told ESPN.com they didn't believe Tressel set up Clarett with privileges.

Clarett led Ohio State to the national championship in 2002 as a freshman and hasn't played football since then. He was suspended for lying to investigators during an NCAA probe of allegations that he received improper benefits from a family friend.



